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## AN ESSAY UPON THE GHOST BELIEF OF SHAKESPEARE.

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### INTRODUCTION.

To disbelieve in the objective reality of spiritual appearances in general is the rule of the present age, and is conceived to be one of the marks and consequences of its intellectual progression; and therefore is it, we think, to be accounted for, that the above subject has never (at least, so far as is known) been treated of. Most of Shakespeare's admirers doubtless imagine that such an intellect as his could never have given credence to a ghost; nor are they very curious to ask, how it was, *on artistic grounds*, that the greatest poet should have produced what many think his greatest work, upon a supernatural theme—upon a theme whose basis is either nervous disease, credulity, or imposture; for into some one of these things are all ghosts now resolved.

If, however, the modern philosopher holds it to be part of *his* appreciation of Shakespeare that he could not have believed in a ghost, it is also certain that the ghost-believing student of the poet-philosopher will claim him as a teacher, on spiritual grounds, and will at least endeavour to show cause why he does so. Holding that ghost-belief, rightly understood, is most rational and salutary, he will deem that it must have had the sanction of such a thinker as Shakespeare.

If there is any one principle which ought to be particularly adhered to above all others in any speculations regarding Shakespeare's opinions, it should surely be, never to adduce a mere *opinion*, expressed by one of his characters, as *his* opinion. Of those who do so, it will probably be found that, to use Horatio's expression, they do but "*botch the words up fit to their own thoughts*." In the essay now made to shew that Shakespeare, apart from his feelings as a poet, believed, as a philosopher, in

supernatural realities, no support to the idea will be sought from such means. Of course, such attempts must be held as equally illegitimate on the opposite side; and it does, indeed, seem wonderful that any real admirers of Shakespeare could ever make such attempts, since they may know that it is very easy so to attribute anything, even the most contrary things, to the author; as witness, for example, the dialogue between Posthumus and the Jailer, in *Cymbeline*.

Nothing, indeed, is easier, than for an author merely to make his characters express *opposite opinions*, without, however, having any fixed opinions or clear knowledge of his own upon the matter in hand; but *it is quite another thing* so to state the opinion as to involve his own knowledge. In attempting this, every one conversant with any given subject knows how instantaneously ignorance is detected where it exists.

We are told that law terms, sea terms, &c., &c., are used by Shakespeare in a manner that implies real knowledge of more than the mere existence of the words. So the ghost-believer looks at Shakespeare, *not* to see what *opinions* are expressed about ghosts, but to ascertain whether what is *said* by the characters, or *done* in the story, implies that the author possessed a philosophy of the subject.

Here perhaps our sceptical friends will smile at the mere idea of a ghost-believer's philosophy. Nevertheless, they must be assured that, if we are mad, we do, at all events, claim to have "a method in our madness." For instance, a ghost-believer would say that the story of *Hamlet* *might* be a hard fact, as much as the story of *Tom Jones* might be one. He believes, and can therefore think that Shakespeare might have believed: 1st, That ghosts do appear objectively; 2nd, That several persons at once may see a ghost; 3rd, That one person may, and another may not, as with Hamlet and the Queen; 4th, That the ends for which ghosts appear may be good, bad, or indifferent—may succeed or may fail, and that there is both fact and philosophy for all this. So much received, we may believe in *Hamlet*.

If we are told that the men who can believe all this can believe anything, we say, No! For example, we could not believe in such a story as that of *Frankenstein* and the monster whom he is represented as, in some sense, creating. We should say that such a story, *as a hard fact*, was altogether contrary to the laws both of the spiritual and of the natural worlds, and we are quite certain that, *so understood*, the writer did not believe in the like of it. Such stories, therefore, we conceive to be essentially *faulty art*, whatever talents may be shown in their execution. In saying thus much, it may be well, in a passing way, to note, as a circumstance not forgotten, that there are writings in which

(unlike *Hamlet*) the images are *professedly allegorical or fanciful*, although this essay does not pretend to touch upon them. Such writings, however, would have *their* true and false, as well as those which are *professedly literal*.

#### THE MEANING OF GHOST-BELIEF.

We will now, then, proceed to state what is meant by ghost-belief, and what are its supposed grounds. In the first place, then, the Spiritualist conceives it to be a great truth, that every human being is truly and properly a *ghost*, or *spirit*, clad for a time in an earthly body. Whether Shakespeare thought this or not, he has very beautifully expressed the idea, in his *Twelfth Night*, when he makes Sebastian say—

A spirit I am indeed;  
But am in that dimension grossly clad,  
Which from the womb I did participate.—*Act V., Scene 1.*

Although it has been assumed previously that no *opinion*, expressed by one of the *poet's characters*, is to be quoted as being necessarily *the poet's opinion also*, yet any piece of wisdom or of thought, as distinguished from an opinion, may be called his wisdom, or his thought. Now, if it should be deemed that *no wisdom* is contained in a given passage, say the one just quoted, still the fact remains, that the thought of the Spiritualist has been so felicitously expressed—and that too in a place where Shakespeare might just as easily have made Sebastian answer more like a modern philosopher, by saying that he was “*not a spirit, but a man of flesh and blood.*” The character of Sebastian is one which may well justify us in concluding that, of the two possible answers to his sister's exclamation—

If spirits can assume both form and suit,  
You come to fright us—

Shakespeare would assign to him the one which he himself considered as *the most sensible*. The same thought which has been thus assigned to Sebastian is to be found likewise in Lorenzo's speech in *The Merchant of Venice* (Act V., Scene 1), where he discourses of the harmony of the spheres, and tells Jessica that—

Such harmony is in immortal souls;  
But whilst *this muddy vesture of decay*  
*Doth grossly close it in*, we cannot hear it.

In the next place—and this is a point of the highest importance—the Spiritualist believes that the ghost, or spirit, which is truly the man, *is in a human form*, as much as the body is; the body being in that form, simply because the ghost or soul is so. Men instinctively personify the virtues and the vices by human forms. Ask the painter to delineate Revenge and Mercy, and he will, as a matter of course, present you with a male and a

female figure, in which Revenge and Mercy will be depicted, *not merely* in the expression of the heads, but *in the whole formation* of the body, and *in the action of every part*. If the artist be competent to paint what he *feels*, and every one else *feels*, all will *know* his meaning. That every ruling passion affects and shapes the whole body, is conceived by the Spiritualist to be an irresistible argument for the human form of the ghost or soul, and the fact has been expressed by Shakespeare in his usual masterly style; it should also be well noted, that he has assigned the expression of the fact to the wise and observing Ulysses. Speaking of Cressida, Ulysses says—

Fie, fie upon her !  
There's a language in her eye, her cheek, her lip ;  
Nay, her foot speaks ; her wanton spirits look out  
At every joint and motive of her body.

Again, how common is it for us to say of some one who at first sight we thought ordinary, or even ugly, but afterwards find to be morally amiable, that we have lost sight of the bodily defect, and have become conscious of a pleasing, and, in some instances, of even a beautiful expression—a thing inconceivable upon any ground but that of the human form of the ghost or soul; a form beautiful if the moral state be good, ugly if the moral state be bad—which latter fact is again wonderfully exemplified in the *diabolical expressions* we sometimes perceive *in faces naturally handsome*. In both instances, the beautiful and the ugly ghost or soul shines through the external, earthly countenance, and actually, when the good or evil feeling is at work, *alters the very form* of that external countenance, thus furnishing the complete demonstration that good and evil feelings are *absolutely in forms*, and such forms, of course, as they mould the external into; that is, into forms beautiful and angelic, or monstrous and diabolical.

These all-important facts Shakespeare has fully included in Desdemona's words—

I saw Othello's visage in his mind.

The common expression that *we see the mind in the countenance*, of course conveys a truth, or rather a part of the truth, but Desdemona's words are fuller; for they give the fact that *the mind has a visage of its own*. This is to be taken as being an absolute truth, which is also the reason why it is eminently poetical. To say that anything can be really *poetical* and yet *not true* is a mere contradiction. Moreover, Shakespeare did not so express Desdemona's feelings by a merely accidental stroke; we must always think that what in the most of persons is simply *felt*, was, by Shakespeare, also most clearly *seen*.

The doubt or denial of the great truth that the human soul has the human form, which is

A combination and a form indeed,

places the doubters in the most distressing dilemmas. They call their doubts and denials philosophy; but what kind of philosophy can that be which deals only in negations?

The arguments for the immortality of the soul (to say nothing of the views in general of a future state) are infinitely clouded and weakened, if its human form is not taken note of as being pre-eminently the foundation-truth upon which all arguments relating to the soul should rest. That foundation-truth being itself capable (as it certainly is) of the fullest demonstration, it follows that all truths which spring legitimately from that foundation-truth must have all the firmness of their original stock.

So much having been premised, let us now suppose any one deeply interested in the subject of the soul's immortality, and anxious to have the clearest views possible upon that sublime theme, sitting himself down to the perusal of Bishop Butler's celebrated *Analogy*, in the hope of attaining to the mental satisfaction for which he seeks, and what would be the result? We venture to think that it must needs be disappointment; an opinion for which some reasons shall now be suggested.

In this well-known work, then, of Bishop Butler, there is a chapter entitled "Of a Future Life," which, of course, contains whatever the eminent divine who wrote it considered as most worthy for him to utter upon the subject; yet, in conclusion, he feels himself called upon to volunteer an admission that all he has been able to say is but little calculated to satisfy curiosity; meaning, evidently, a curiosity directed towards the general outline of a future life—a wish, in short, to have some faint idea of what it is like.

It is, indeed, true that Bishop Butler follows up his admission by observing that, nevertheless, all the purposes of religion are as well answered as by a demonstrative proof. Doubtless he believed so; but it cannot be denied but that such dogmatic assertions are looked at with great dissatisfaction by the sceptically inclined; and the Spiritualist believes that, if the truest and deepest grounds were taken, there would be no necessity for any such admission as Bishop Butler has felt himself called upon to make. The fact that curiosity is a feeling of the human mind, and one that, properly directed, performs the high use of leading us on to knowledge, renders it at least very possible that views of truth which are but little able to satisfy curiosity may be very incomplete views, and such as we *therefore ought not* to rest

satisfied with, even as believers. Shakespeare wrote very wisely when he made Pericles say—

Truth can never be confirmed enough,  
Though doubts did ever sleep.

It is, by the way, very common to hear that curiosity which seeks to know something more of the future life than the bare fact of such a life, stigmatized as being a vain curiosity, and many religious persons would even condemn it as involving a desire to be what they term,

Wise above what is written.

If it were a curiosity which could not be gratified, it might then justly be called *vain*; but is there, or can there be, a natural curiosity which cannot be gratified? The Spiritualist doubts it; nor can he admit curiosity in itself to be anything but excellent, and most especially so when directed to lofty subjects: consequently, he believes that every curiosity which mankind can feel, or rather *cannot but feel*, may attain to a legitimate satisfaction.

Supposing, now, that in the exercise of this most rational curiosity concerning the soul and our future life, we should have arrived at the conviction that the soul is in the human form, and it seems immediately to follow that such a soul, in the future life as well as in this, requires its objectivities, or things out of itself; and not only do we feel that we require them, but we find ourselves upon the track of understanding *how* we may have them.

We find then, in the next place, that not only can we affirm a human form for the soul, but we can also affirm a heat and a light as belonging to the soul; a heat and a light, too, so much more potent than the heat and light of nature, that it is only by virtue of the former that we can know or perceive the latter. It is well known to us all, that heat and light are constantly affirmed of spiritual things; as when, for example, we say that our intellects are *enlightened*, or that *a light* has been thrown upon a subject—meaning, that reasons have been given and seen, and so forth. Also, we can affirm that *the passions and feelings*, as distinguished from *the intellect*, are felt as a heat or fire, often extending most perceptibly into the natural body, which those passions and feelings will cause to be, as it were, on fire, even upon the coldest days—for we all know that a man may *burn* with love or with rage upon such days; thus proving that there is another heat or fire besides that of the natural sun, and which heat or fire works from within to without, or from the spiritual to the natural sphere.

Having thus opened our understandings to the fact that the soul is in a human form, and that it enjoys a spiritual light and heat, we are then led on, by the most rigid logic, to the admission

of a spiritual sun, from whence this spiritual light and heat originate. This second grand truth arrived at, *our rational curiosity* has received its answer—for if there is a spiritual sun, then there are spiritual atmospheres; and all these truths put together point out to us a spiritual world of forms which shall be *objective* to the soul, or real man.

If, now, these positions can be admitted, all is then told to us that can be asked, since what we all desire, and, indeed, *all that we do desire*, is to be assured of the possibility of our having, in the future life, an external form or body, and a world external to that, both of which shall harmonize with our *inmost life*.

That this much-longed-for harmony is, in the present world, absolutely impossible, is but too well known, even in the case of any one endowed with the best regulated mind, and with every other advantage that this world can afford. Not only does the natural body decay, and become from day to day a less manageable engine, but *an opposition*, rather than a *harmony*, is felt to arise from almost everything in its turn. To have our bodies and every external circumstance in harmony with the internal, is to every one the exception, although it is what we are constantly striving for; and, therefore, any view which makes it apprehensible that such a consummation (which would constitute a real heaven) is possible, surely is worthy of attention; especially when *all* for it is positive and absolute, resting, as it does, upon those surprising manifestations of the soul—the fine arts, and the forms of expression instinctively used by men.

It is certainly singular that, notwithstanding the acknowledged power of the fine arts, they do not seem ever to have been considered in their bearing upon these most recondite questions; and it is, as we apprehend, quite the tendency of the religious classes to smile at any one who claims for the inner world an objectivity similar to that of the natural world. The idea seems to be, that the one world must be something every way so different from the other, that, in short, we can form no idea at all about the matter. This, however, is a mere negation on the part of the intellect, or, in plain English, a refusing to trouble itself at all with the question: whereas, if the feelings were spoken from, as they should be, it would become perfectly clear that *nothing more nor less* than the harmony of the internal and the external was *the want* of the soul. Now, if the hope and desire for a future life be, as amongst religious men it is confidently deemed they are, powerful arguments that there is such a life, this other desire for *the harmonious inner and outer life* as powerfully shows what that future life must be like.

Thus, then, to use Shakespeare's words—

The wheel has come full circle;

and thus are we fairly brought round again to our starting-point, and are enabled, as it is hoped, to see more clearly how much lies in this question of the ghost-belief of Shakespeare. We can see that a belief usually stigmatized as merely superstitious, even by the Christian world, may, nevertheless, prove to have been the belief of the highest poet; but then, to have been the belief of that highest poet, it must also be a belief which the highest reason, properly exerted, can sanction. If the tree is to be known by its fruits, have we not a right to say that a rational ghost-belief bears fruits of the most wholesome kind. It helps to bind religion and the fine arts together, and to solve problems of universal interest yet supposed insoluble even by the most eminent men, when, as in the case of Bishop Butler, they omit to go down into the very roots of men's feelings (that is, of the soul's feelings) as they are manifested in the forms of language and in the fine arts.

SHAKESPEARE'S IGNORANCE.—DR. ALDERSON.

Dr. Alderson was the author of an essay upon "Apparitions," in which, as usual, he refers apparitions to a diseased state of the brain, and, after stating his cases, expresses himself thus—

From what I have related, it will be seen why it should happen that only one at a time could ever see a ghost, and here *we may lament that our celebrated poet*, whose knowledge of nature is every Englishman's boast, *had not known such cases, and their causes*, as I have related; he would not then, perhaps, have made his ghosts visible and audible on the stage. Every expression, every look, in *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, is perfectly natural and consistent with men so agitated, and quite sufficient to convince us of what they suffer, see, and hear; but it must be evident that, the disease being confined to the individual, such object must be seen and heard only by the individual.

Thus far Dr. Alderson. Nevertheless, that Shakespeare, both in his *Macbeth* and in his *Hamlet*, has shewn himself fully conversant with the disease-theory, the following passages will completely evince:—

*Macbeth.* Is this a dagger which I see before me,  
The handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee:  
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.  
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible  
To feeling, as to sight? Or art thou but  
*A dagger of the mind, a false creation,  
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?*

Again, Lady Macbeth exclaims—

O proper stuff!  
*This is the very painting of your fear.*

Also, the Queen, in *Hamlet*—

This is the very coinage of your brain;  
*This bodiless creation, ecstasy  
Is very cunning in.*



Seeing, then, that Shakespeare did know of such a theory as Dr. Alderson's, a few remarks will be offered upon it. According to that theory, we are to think that disease is *the efficient cause* of apparitions. Now, let it be observed that *an eye*, in the course of nature, is the organ of seeing. Forms and colours seem to require *an eye*, upon which they shall be impressed, in order that they may be seen; but here we have a set of cases in which certain forms and colours become visible which yet are evidently not impressed upon the retina of *the bodily eye*, and then the conclusion is at once jumped at that these forms and colours are mere images in the brain, having no objective reality whatsoever. Nay, more, this brain must be *a diseased brain*. It does not avail for you to point out that in many cases *the visions are beautiful* to the eye; and also that *beautiful music* is perceived, which seems to require an ear: all must be referred to *disease as the efficient cause*. Such are the things which *the incredulous* can bring themselves to believe. Beautiful forms and beautiful sounds, although in themselves *essentially order*, are thus held to spring from *disorder*.

All this, however, is merely *assertion*, and *no real reason* has yet been given why the apparitions and the sounds should not be impressions upon the spiritual eye and ear, and from objects in the spiritual world, which is the proper habitation of the ghost or spirit, as the material world is of the body "the gross dimension," the "muddy vesture of decay."

Dr. Alderson begs the question altogether, when he asserts that apparitions are never seen but by one person at a time, and that one in an abnormal state. But grant that it even were so, that would not at all necessarily touch the question of the objective reality. Why should not the disease be the *occasional* cause only, and not the *efficient* one? In certain nervous states, the senses which deal with the external world are sometimes so highly raised that, for instance, a conversation taking place in a remote part of the house shall be heard perfectly, which could not have been heard at all had the person hearing been in a normal state. So a disease, disturbing for awhile the harmony between the spirit and the natural body, causes the former to have *its* perceptions more or less opened to the objects of its own proper world.

Again, when real objectivity is spoken of, it must never be forgotten, that *even in the material world there are very different kinds of realities*; and this is a point which the Spiritualist has never seen met, or, apparently, even dreamt of, by the sceptics. A phantasmagoria *is real*, yet *not really* what it seems to be; and a portrait is *a real representation* of a man, although it is *not a real man*. Now, allow that the spiritual world, being also a

world of causes, must, as such, have *its real representations of its realities*, and all the difficulties attendant upon waking or other dreams will fast begin to vanish. Drive away from the mind the groundless conception that all are merely affections of the brain, and the striking phenomena of every kind of dreamings are seen to have necessarily *a reality in their own sphere*, even if the reality be only of that sort which a phantasmagoria or a picture have in theirs. In both cases, the reality, although only of the representative kind, *implies* other realities also: that is, realities *on which*, or *in which*, the representation can take place, and also *real powers* adequate to form the representation.

In conclusion, we may rest fully assured of one thing—namely, that *whatever Shakespeare has done* respecting supernatural appearances, *has not been from ignorance* such as Dr. Alderson has attributed to him.

#### SHAKESPEARE AND HIS SPIRIT OF INQUIRY.

It has then been seen that it certainly arose not from *ignorance* upon Shakespeare's part, when he chose, in his great work, to introduce a ghost who is visible not only to one person but to three persons at once. Let us rather conclude that it was from *knowledge* that he did so: for, in the first place, how is it possible to believe that so great an artist did not use every means for *thinking justly* upon supernatural themes, *while writing* upon them; and, secondly, we should remember that there is a possibility of his even having had experimental evidence in his own person. Many more persons have such evidence than is commonly supposed, and it is surely easier to think that Shakespeare's inner life was as remarkable as his works than to think otherwise. However, be that as it may, he most thoroughly knew what the true spirit of inquiry should be, and he has knit up into a single line a direction for that spirit. Hamlet's words—

There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,  
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy—

are continually quoted; but let our most especial attention be directed to what immediately precedes those lines. When Horatio exclaims,

O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Hamlet has had assigned to him this fine rejoinder—

And therefore as a stranger give it welcome.

Here is a piece of advice utterly at variance with the feelings and practice of all those persons whose tendency it is to write and to talk, not merely against the supernatural, but against anything else whatsoever which to them appears *strange*, whether it be the circulation of the blood, the lighting by gas, or the

travelling by a railway. All these things and many more have been stigmatized, and all for the want of such wisdom as this single line contains; for this is one of the cases wherein we have a right to make the distinction already alluded to, between the mere expression of an opinion *belonging only to the character*, and the utterance of a piece of real practical thought or wisdom *belonging also to the writer*.

If it is asked how we would show that the true spirit of inquiry is actually embodied in this single line, we would state our position thus. *Welcoming* the strange fact gives it its just chance of being admitted as a truth, if it really be such. *Welcoming it as a stranger* will secure us from being ultimately imposed upon; and the phrase is most felicitously expressive of a kind of attention or courtesy due towards the matter inquired into, while it warns us against that absolute trust which we give to a tried old friend. Upon such grounds it is that we conceive "the be-all and the end-all" of right-thinking inquiry to be contained in these words of Hamlet. The Spiritualists feel well-assured that Shakespeare, both as a philosopher and as an artist, acted upon the axiom he has assigned to the philosophic Prince, and they also lament that to do *the very contrary* should be the almost universal practice.

#### SHAKESPEARE AND "OUR PHILOSOPHICAL PERSONS."

In *All's Well that Ends Well*, Shakespeare has made the old lord, Lafew, exactly characterize that unphilosophical scepticism which sets itself above the wise axiom allotted to Hamlet, of giving welcome, as to a stranger, to the strange; at the same time, the speaker administers to such a scepticism the most grave and the most just rebuke.

*Lafew.* They say miracles are past, and we have our philosophical persons to make *modern and familiar*, things *supernatural and causeless*. Hence is it that we make trifles of terrors, *ensconcing ourselves into seeming knowledge*, when we should submit ourselves to an unknown fear.

How wisely does this passage censure that spirit which, assuming to be philosophical, attempts to explain away the operations of the internal world into "states of the brain," "deceptions of the senses," or "impostures." This is, indeed, "*ensconcing themselves into seeming knowledge*," on the part of the "*philosophical persons*," who really ought to know that, as far as imposture is concerned, every true thing is simulated, and that, indeed, this very simulation is in itself a testimony to some underlying truth.

Coleridge has made a remark upon Shakespeare's use of the word "causeless" in Lafew's speech, which remark shall be here transcribed.

Shakespeare, inspired, as it might seem, with all wisdom, here uses the word "causeless" in its strict philosophical sense, cause being truly predicable only of *phenomena*, that is, things natural, and not of *noumena*, or things supernatural.

This is surely an excellent observation of Coleridge, and points out also to us that the expression, "we should submit to an unknown fear," contained in the next sentence, is not to be understood in the low sense of any intellectual prostration, but as corresponding to the transcendental "causeless."

It is certainly impossible to overrate the importance of admitting the transcendental, or that which towers above mere logic. For want of such an admission, we may find people arguing against the existence of a God and against the immortality of the soul, because those facts cannot be *proved*, as they phrase it, *logically*. Yet these very persons, if they happened to be lovers of the arts of poetry, painting and music, would at once feel the monstrous absurdity of attempting a merely logical critique upon those arts. They would instantly see that a man who wanted to have it *logically proved* to him that Shakespeare, Michael Angelo and Handel were great men, was simply *proving* his own insensibility to the arts in which they excelled. So it is with the two great questions above mentioned. Whosoever allows the transcendental, the *feelings*, to be opened within him, affirms absolutely a God and a future life, and can also then, by his reasoning faculties, satisfy the affirmation. Those who will not allow the transcendental to be opened within them, but will insist upon beginning with the merely logical, can never reach to the highest truth, whether it be in religion or in the fine arts. It is, therefore, most interesting to see that Shakespeare has thus set his mark upon this all-important point. He has written a speech, in which, in the most close and beautiful manner, "*things supernatural and causeless*" are affirmed, and the consequences of their denial pointed out.

As the character which speaks must always be considered in estimating Shakespeare's meaning, it may be observed that Lafau is painted as a humorous, and also as a wise and good man. He is on the freest terms with the worthy King, and even the wild young lord, Bertram, is made to say—

I do know him well; and common speech gives him a worthy pass.

There is certainly something very exquisite in his sly and good-humoured (as well as profound) hit at the "philosophical persons," and he still carries on a similar strain, while exulting in the King's wonderful cure, after being, as he observes, "relinquished of the artists, of all the learned and authentic fellows." It is evident how heartily Lafau would have rejoiced at some of the wonderful cures wrought in our own day by means of

mesmerism and homœopathy to the infinite discomfiture of OUR "learned and authentic fellows."

If Shakespeare himself had been a "philosophical person," he never could have written Lafeu's speeches. In them he has shown that he saw *clean through* the sceptical spirit, *a thing impossible for a sceptic to do*.

#### SHAKESPEARE'S IDEA OF TRUE ART.

It will, we may presume be conceded, that whatsoever is essentially true of one of the fine arts must also be true of the others; and it is proposed to test this by quoting Hamlet's advice to the Players (wherein proof is given of the author's views as to the artist-like in acting), and substituting for the the word *playing*, the word *poetry*.

Let your discretion be your tutor; suit the action to the word, the word to the action, with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature; for anything so done is from the purpose of *poetry*, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is to hold, as 'twere the mirror up to nature; to shew virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time its form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, although it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve; the censure of which one, must, in your allowance, o'erweigh a whole theatre of others.

Now assuming that these were Shakespeare's own views upon *playing*, and it does not seem likely that in this place he would make Hamlet speak otherwise than rationally, can it be doubted that he would also have applied such views to *the poem to be played*; yet, if a ghost be only the product of a diseased brain, and the appearance of a ghost to three persons at once a sheer impossibility, "the modesty of nature," has been very much "o'erstept" in the poem of Hamlet, and if the end of all the art is,

To hold, as 'twere the mirror up to nature,

what can be more "overdone," according to the sceptical philosophy?

Nevertheless the poem of Hamlet does not seem to have made

The judicious grieve,

and even those who think an apparition only a state of the brain feel that a powerful effect has been produced, although upon every sound principle of artist-like reasoning, nothing but displeasure should have ensued in the minds of those who believe that in any given work, the mirror has *not* been held up to nature.

In the meanwhile, the ghost-believer thinks himself fully justified in pronouncing Hamlet to be, from every point of view, "an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning."

## SHAKESPEARE AND HIS ADMIRERS.

The practice of insisting upon ghost-belief as being a mere superstition, does certainly seem to place many of Shakespeare's most able and zealous admirers in a false position, when they are treating of him as an artist. But let them be heard in their own words. And, 1st, Mr. Morgann, in his excellent essay upon the character of Sir John Falstaff, thus expresses himself in a note :—

Ghosts differ from other imaginary beings in this—that they belong to no element; have no specific nature or character; and are effects, however harsh the expression, supposed to be without a cause; the reason of which is, that they are not the creation of the poet but the servile copies or transcripts of popular imagination, connected with supposed reality and religion. Should the poet assign the cause, and call them the mere painting or *coinage of the brain*, he would disappoint his own end and destroy the beings he had raised. Should he assign fictitious causes, and add a specific nature and a local habitation, it would not be endured, or the effect would be lost by the conversion of one thing into another. The approach to reality in this case defeats all the arts and managements of fiction.

Let us compare this critique upon ghosts with Shakespeare's treatment of the ghost in *Hamlet*. He has there given him a most specific character—that of an injured man seeking for revenge. It sounds strangely, too, to hear a professor of Christianity speaking of what is understood to be the soul of a deceased man as of an effect without a cause; and then we are called upon to think that a great poet could make *servile copies* from popular imaginations, when the truth is that all great artists make it their delight to copy nature, even to the minutest details, as well knowing that in no other way can the most lasting effects be produced. That anything weak or false, or the copy of such things, should produce great artistic effects, is surely against all sound reasonings; and we therefore conclude that when the philosophical sceptic denies a ghost he does so merely from intellect, which is very likely to be in the wrong, and not from feeling, the ultimate test of all works of art.

Although the ghost in *Hamlet* has every mark of reality, yet the local habitation, by which apparently Mr. Morgann means a place in the external world, was not needed for him. His place was in the spiritual world, and Hamlet and his friends saw him with their spiritual eyes, at the same time that the platform was beheld by their natural eyes. That such was the case Shakespeare knew perfectly well, and this accounts for the fact of the Queen not being able to see the ghost, although Hamlet did. The ghost did not wish the Queen to see him, and therefore he did not present himself to her spiritual eyes. Shakespeare knew that man is an inhabitant of two worlds, and consequently that all these things involved the gravest truths. Were it not so and that they were merely the *servile copies of false imaginations*,

they would justly offend every cultivated mind; but we have daily experience that they do not do so.

Secondly, Coleridge speaks of the ghost in *Hamlet* as involving

*A superstition* connected with the most mysterious truths of religion, and of

Shakespeare's consequent reverence in his treatment of it.

Here again the ghost-believer cannot but have an uncomfortable sensation of incomplete criticism. A superstition, that is, a weakness and a falsity, seems to have but little claim for reverential treatment from a great artist. Why could not Mr. Coleridge have said, instead of "*a superstition*,"

*A truth* connected with the most mysterious truths of revealed religion.

Thirdly, Lessing says—

Voltaire has regarded the appearance of a dead person as a miracle, and Shakespeare as a natural event. Which of the two thought most as a philosopher is a question that we have nothing to do with. But the Englishman thought most as a poet.

Here we have the pleasing admission that Shakespeare has treated the appearance of the ghost as a part of the normal system of things; for so much is fairly implied in the phrase, "a natural event." But why does Lessing say that whether this was philosophical or not is a question with which we have nothing to do? and why is a distinction made between philosophy and poetry which seems to imply that what was bad in the one might be good in the other? Is such a distinction good philosophy? and have we not everything to do with the question in estimating Shakespeare as an artist? When the soothsayer, in *Antony and Cleopatra*, is asked—

Is't you, sir, that know things?

he significantly replies—

In nature's infinite book of secrecy,  
A little I can read.

Can it be doubted but that Shakespeare would have also said for himself what he has written for the soothsayer? Surely it cannot be doubted; and in that "infinite book of secrecy" Shakespeare would have found all that he has written.

Fourthly, Mr. Charles Knight, speaking of the appearance of the ghost to Hamlet, observes that

The images are of this world, and are not of this world. They belong at once to *popular superstition* and the *highest poetry*.

Mr. Knight, soon after this, makes some remarks connected with which a few observations may be offered. He says—

How exquisite are the last lines of the Ghost; full of the poetry of external nature and of the depth of human affection, as if the spirit that had for so short

a time been cut off from life to know the secrets of "the prison house" still clung to the earthly remembrance of the beautiful and the tender, that even a spirit might indulge.

"The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,  
And 'gins to pale his ineffectual fire:  
Adieu, adieu, Hamlet! remember me."

The point which the present writer wishes here to touch upon is as follows. The sceptic may say to the ghost-believer thus: "How upon your own shewing could a spirit who has left the earthly body, the 'mortal coil,' be cognizant as Shakespeare has made this ghost, of the objects of the earthly world? You, the ghost-believers plainly inculcate as your philosophy that each world to be objectively known, requires the spiritual or the natural organs as the case may be.

To this objection, which is indeed a most obvious one, it is replied, that the solution is easy and that the proof of facts kindred to those in Hamlet, lies within the reach of every one who is really disposed to make the proper inquiries for them.

A philosopher, who was also a seer, has observed, and to the best of our judgment, has shown, that although a spirit assuredly cannot of himself see the objects of the natural world, yet he can do so, when in communication, or, as the mesmerist would say, in *rapport* with a man or men. The spirit, then, through their natural organs, perceives what they perceive, and that such kind of communication between two persons is a mere fact, is known to all who have paid any due attention to mesmerism and its results.

In certain mesmeric cases, a person thrown into the peculiar sleep, shall taste the eatable or the drinkable which is being partaken of by one with whom the sleeper is in *rapport*, he shall hear the voice of that one, but not the voice of others, and so on.

In the fine effect then, which Shakespeare has here produced and which has called forth such praises from Mr. Knight, the poet still does not

O'erstep the modesty of nature.

Shakespeare knew better than ever to aim at any effect, by untrue, and therefore unartist-like means.

MACBETH.—DR. JOHNSON.

The following remarks by Dr. Johnson upon Macbeth, will serve as we imagine, to display some of the weaknesses of the usual Shakespearian criticism. They are quoted also as affording us a starting-point for the further unfolding of a different criticism, while the reader will have the advantage of seeing both sides of the question placed before him in the very words of each pleader. Thus then has written the worthy doctor:



In order to make a true estimate of the abilities and merit of a writer, it is always necessary to examine the genius of his age and the opinions of his contemporaries. A poet who should now make the whole action of his tragedy depend upon enchantment, and produce the chief events by the assistance of supernatural agents, would be censured as transgressing the bounds of probability, be banished from the theatre to the nursery, and condemned to write fairy tales instead of tragedies; but a survey of the notions that prevailed at the time this play was written, will prove that Shakespeare was in no danger of such censors, since he only turned the system that was then universally admitted to his advantage, and was far from overburdening the credulity of his audience. . . . Upon this general infatuation Shakespeare might be easily allowed to found a play, especially since he has followed with great exactness such histories as were then thought true, nor can it be doubted that the scenes of enchantment, however they may now be ridiculed, were both by himself and his audience, thought awful and affecting.—See Dr. Johnson's "Introductory Remarks upon *Macbeth*."

Now there is certainly something very strange in such remarks as the preceding, to those who cannot admit that a great work of art can possibly stand upon an untrue and merely childish foundation: to them there is a somewhat altogether unpleasing in the idea that Shakespeare should need to have excuses made for writing *Macbeth*, and they wish to learn whence it is that the work still stands its ground if such criticisms be well founded. There is, or there is not, a supernatural world, and no one would have affirmed such a world more strongly than Dr. Johnson; then arises the question whether it can, *in any age*, be wrong for the artist to make use of that supernatural world to the best of his skill. If it is skilfully made use of, we find that such works still give delight, in spite of the sceptical philosophy, which, as it has no hold upon the heart, can never very powerfully affect us where the fine arts are in question; or if that philosophy does affect us, it is by diminishing the pleasure which those arts are calculated to give. Shakespeare, however, was both a heart and a head-philosopher, and perfectly well knew that all *real beliefs* had a *root*, and belonged to human nature. Consequently, when constructing a poem upon such themes as witchcraft or enchantment, Shakespeare would examine *the root* of those ideas, and he would know that by so doing, and only by so doing, could he produce a work which time could not injure. The Witches in *Macbeth* are not incredible, except in those who deny, or, when they are criticising, forget a spiritual world. Shakespeare has treated the Witches as spirits as may be evident from the fact that they suddenly vanish, their appearance being only to the spiritual eyes of those who saw them. The same point is involved as that which has already been touched upon in speaking of the ghost scenes in *Hamlet*.

Dr. Johnson alludes to the ridicule which he conceives to be attached by a modern to the scenes of enchantment; but ridicule is, in itself, no test of truth. We must first know who and what

the ridiculer is ; for there is nothing, however good, which is not ridiculed by somebody. The incantations of those evil spirits, the Witches, and the ingredients of their cauldron, are not necessarily ridiculous to those who believe in an inner spiritual world, and who also believe that every form in nature is deeply significant of, and likewise comes from, that spiritual world. Had those evil spirits, when at their wicked work, used ingredients expressive of what is good and heavenly—such as precious stones, beautiful flowers, and the like—that would have been really ridiculous, and every one, whether a sceptic or not, would have been displeased with the inconsistency. As it is, there exists, in fact, a “dreadful harmony” in all that takes place, which harmony, however, must be more especially sought for in Shakespeare’s poem ; for he is not to be held as responsible for any stage misconceptions in the matter, those very stage misconceptions themselves clearly having their origin in scepticism. It might make a very great difference indeed as to the whole stage treatment of the Witches, if the question were duly raised whether they should be considered merely as strange-looking old women only to be personated by the comic actors, or as evil spirits, inhabitants of the inner, hellish world, who, with a terrible earnest, are laying out their wicked snares, their “riddles and affairs of death.”

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### LIFE’S LESSON.

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LIFE is full of sad surprises,  
 Cares, and griefs, and sudden tears ;  
 Vain the foolish, false surmises  
 Of the fruitful happy years.

Friends prove false, and love grows cold ;  
 Sorrow still the heart bereaves ;  
 Youth’s high hopes, like fairy gold,  
 Turn, alas ! to worthless leaves.

Mother, sister, wife, and friend,  
 Darling of our heart and home,  
 All are taken : at the end  
 Of life we stand alone—alone !

Only God, and heaven, and angels—  
*Only these* are left, I trow ;  
 Only these, and God’s evangels—  
 Faith and love, are left us now !

O foolish heart ! thy murmurs cease,  
 More than all He takes away,  
 God gives us back with large increase,  
 O trust, and wait the Perfect Day !

T. S.

## THOUGHTS SUGGESTED BY THE HISTORY OF THE MAID OF KENT.

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THE article in the March number of the *Spiritual Magazine* for the present year upon the Holy Maid of Kent, especially when taken in connection with certain remarks upon Julian the Apostate, contained in another article in the same magazine, have suggested to the mind of the writer an idea now laid before the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, hoping that further elaboration of the hypothesis may thereby be obtained.

The passage relating to Julian bears so noticeably upon the idea about to be suggested, that with the reader's permission it is here quoted in full:—

We must not indeed shrink from the admission that intercourse with the invisible world has been the origin of all superstitions and all erroneous theologies, that to it even may be due their persistence for a while after they cease to harmonize with the general spirit of the society over which they once held dominion. The most striking example of the latter species of influence is to be found in the fact, of which the evidence is ample, that such was the source of that imperial zeal which in the fourth century ran counter to Christianity, and sought so ardently the restoration of the ancient creed. History represents one of the ablest of the Cæsars, whose mind, of a cast at once statesmanlike and philosophic, had been trained by Christian preceptors under a prelate's eye, as having been ensnared by crafty pretenders to superhuman science, and through their arts, inspired with devotion to Paganism, which filled his soul; but to the reader familiar with spiritual phenomena it is evident, even from the sneering narrative of Gibbon, that the apostasy of Julian, and his intense faith, *was in truth due to communication with the invisible world; spirits of departed Pagans still clinging to their earthly creed, seem to have impressed him powerfully, visiting him, and conversing with him in the forms of the Olympian gods; we may learn, says Gibbon, "from his faithful friend, the orator Libanus, that he lived in a perpetual intercourse with the gods and goddesses, that they descended upon earth to enjoy the conversation of their favourite hero, that they gently interrupted his slumbers by touching his hand or his hair, that they warned him of every impending danger, and conducted him by their infallible wisdom in every action of his life."*

The idea which I would suggest is this, whether, both in the case of the Holy Maid of Kent, and in Julian, we have not before us striking instances of the operation of a fixed law of the Divine economy, ever to be observed at work, when any religion or creed is about to die; and whether, if we search carefully, these instances may not in our hands become a clue, whereby we may trace out the influence of the disembodied spirits upon the lives and actions of men, operating with a sway mighty as that of the wind upon the waves.

Spirits, we have long since discovered—not alone through the teaching of Swedenborg, but also through the individual experience of modern phenomena—continue in the world of spirits to hold the same opinions as those held by them before their departure. At all events, in the majority of instances, this

seems to be the case—especially if these spirits belong to a conservative order of mind—and, ordinarily, the spirits continue unchanged in their opinions for an incalculably long period after casting off the flesh.

Thus it is easy to imagine with what intense anxiety the spirits not yet advanced out of the sphere of their earthly affections and creeds, must watch the rise and progress of new and, to them, necessarily antagonistic and dangerous beliefs. This intensity of their feeling—especially if their relatives and descendants should be amongst the earthly combatants—must necessarily draw them irresistibly earthward, and cause them in all great periods of transition from one phase of religious truth to another, to mingle, to an extent almost incredible to us, in the struggles of opinion waging amongst men. Sympathy would attract like to like; and the desire of the spirits being—as in both cases referred to—the demonstration of the verity of the old faith, through signs and wonders, which not even their opponents in the flesh should dare to gainsay, they would seek out carefully amongst the human beings open to their influence, through similarity of belief, for those organisms most suitable for the manifestation of their presence, and develop them as their “mediums.” In many cases the very exaltation produced by religious enquiry, and by the excitement of the universal mental crisis, would in itself prepare the “medium” for the use of the spirits, and bring him into *rapport* with them. The whole life and educational training of Julian appear singularly to have fitted him to receive spiritual communications; add to which, if we are to receive the testimony of Gregory of Nazianzen, we discover in his boyhood traces of physical mediumship.

“When Julian and his brother Gallus were induced to undertake the labour of erecting a chapel over the tomb of the martyr Mammæ, the work went on rapidly under the hands of Gallus, but the stones which Julian laid were constantly overthrown as by some invisible agency. Gregory of Nazianzen says that he had this fact from eye witnesses; and he seems to regard it as a prophetic miracle.”—*Progress of the Religious Ideas, by Mrs. Child.*

Still more striking was the attempt to which these Pagan spirits excited Julian, namely, to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem to disprove the prophecy of Christ. This is recorded by Ammianus Marcellinus, an officer in Julian’s army, whom Gibbon praises as a most reliable historian. Julian invited the Jews from all parts to rebuild the temple, but every attempt failed, for fires burst out of the foundations and repeatedly drove away the workmen. Crosses and stars of fire covered the clothes of the work-people, as if to shew that it was the Cross defeating Paganism.

When through such marked “mediums,” therefore, as the

Maid of Kent, and especially through such as Julian, emperor and philosopher, the whole strength of the invisible battery of spirit is directed against the foe, no wonder if the advancing army of the new truth suddenly stagger, and even for a time suffer a defeat. In the celebrated picture painted by Kaulbach of the "Battle of the Huns," where the spirits of the slain, in vast swarms, Huns and Romans, crowding onward from the distant heavens, are seen, according to the ancient legend, to descend upon the bodies of the slain and re-enter them, only, however, to raise up the corpses once more to an unending conflict in the skies, we behold a great philosophic truth, and a truth kindred to the one now under consideration. Nevertheless there is this great difference. It is not into corpses, but into the souls and bodies of living humanity that our spirits descend, and there re-commence the undying conflicts of old and new phases of faith.

Could we, however, raised into an angelic beatified condition, and firmly planted upon the "Rock of Ages," watch surging beneath us these waves of mind, the question suggests itself whether we should not only recognize a vast and awful harmony in the operation of the laws affecting the combatants, but even recognize this conflict as vitally needful for the evolvment of the entirety of truth? Should we not behold God the Spirit, and Union of all spirits making use of His spiritual hosts, and of each spirit in its separate order of development, to do His behest, and to carry on in its degree the work of human—and doubtless also of its own spiritual progress—even whilst apparently seeming simply to itself, to obey the law of sympathetic attraction implanted within its own small individuality?

Should we not, in the ever-recurring instinct of the new truth, to ignore and even to destroy the old, and, in the instinct of the old truth, to ignore and destroy the new, learn to recognize these two antagonistic, struggling, yet eternally linked together, vitalities, as emanations from the heart of Deity, as the never-pausing, ever equally returning throbs of the sublime, all-loving, mysteriously-veiled Heart of the Universe, throbs which, in the ears of angels, for ever chime through the upward circling ages, in sweetest married-tones of harmony, "Law and Liberty, Conservatism and Liberalism, 'Night antagonizing Day, and Day antagonizing Night?'"

Should we not, in these recurrent convulsions around the couch of each moribund religion, around the cradle of each infant truth, born, not unfrequently, of the dying religion, learn to recognize the operative forces of the Alpha and Omega of all time?

I will conclude with an extract from a French work, giving an instance from our own times, of the return of spirits to

attempt the preservation of their own old Pagan faith, in opposition to the spread of Christianity.

In No. 216 of a French Roman Catholic work, entitled *La Propagation de la Foi* (September 1864), we meet with the following singular account of spiritual phenomena on a mighty scale, which, it appears, preceded the recent revolution in Madagascar. The details of this revolution will be fresh in our readers' minds, together with the endeavours of Radama to introduce Christian usages amongst his subjects.\*

"Before relating the tragical end of Radama II.," observes a writer in *La Propagation de la Foi*, "it is needful to recall another fact which has scarcely made a greater noise than the former, and which has had two hundred thousand persons as witnesses;" it may, indeed, be regarded as the prelude or *avant-courier* of the attack made upon the unfortunate prince. This fact is the Ramanenjana—

But what is the Ramanenjana? you ask.

This word, expressive of *tension*, designates a singular malady which shewed itself first in the south of France. There was knowledge of it at Tananarive already a month previously. At first a vague rumour circulated amongst the people regarding it. It was said that vast troops of men and women attacked by a mysterious affection were going up towards the capital from the south in order to speak to the king on the part of his defunct mother. It was said that these troops progressed by short day's journeys, camping each evening in the villages, and increasing in numbers by the recruits made upon the way.

No one, however, imagined that the Ramanenjana was near to the city, when suddenly it made its appearance there a few days before Palm Sunday.

Here is what has been written to us on this subject:—

"At the moment when we still believed Ramanenjana, or Ramina bè, as it is called, was far from us, it has burst forth amongst us like a bomb-shell. We hear everywhere in the city, of convulsions and *convulsionnaires*. Their number is calculated to be ten thousand. They are encamped at the present time at Machamasina, a *champ de mars* situated at the foot of the capital. The uproar made is so great that we are prevented from sleeping; you may imagine that the noise must be great, when from the distance of a league it reaches us and troubles our repose.

"On Shrove Tuesday a grand review was to be held at Soanerana. When the drums beat the '*rappel*,' more than a thousand soldiers quitted the ranks and commenced dancing the Ramanenjana. It was to no purpose that the officers shouted, stormed, menaced; the review could not take place.

"This malady acts especially upon the nerves, and exercises there such '*pression*,' that it soon causes convulsions and hallucination, which it is difficult to account for simply from a scientific point of view.

"Those who are attacked at first suffer from violent pains in the head, in the nape of the neck, and then in the stomach. At the end of a little time convulsions commence. It is at this point that the patients begin to speak with the dead; they see the Queen Ranavalana, Radama the First, Andrian, Ampoinémérnia, and other spirits of the departed, who speak to them and give them various commissions.

"The Ramanenjana appears to be especially deputed by old Ranavalona to signify to Radama that he must return to the old state of things, that he must cause prayer to cease, must send away the whites, must forbid the presence of swine within the holy city; otherwise great misfortunes would menace him, and she would renounce him as her son.

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\* The old Queen Ranavalana died in 1861, and her son Rakoto mounted the throne under the title of Radama II. The king sent an autograph letter to Queen Victoria, and the Queen replied by an autograph letter. Various presents accompanied this letter from the Queen of England; amongst them was a quarto family Bible, also a coronation robe for the queen. The coronation took place on September 1862, and on the 12th of May Radama II. was put to death in a general insurrection, being strangled by one of the fanatic *convulsionnaires*.

"Another effect of these hallucinations is, that the greater portion of the persons subjected to their influences imagine themselves to be carrying burdens after the dead; this one believes that he is bearing a packet of soap, another a copper, another a mattress, another firearms, another keys, services of plate, &c.

"These ghosts must travel at a speed truly infernal, since the unfortunates who follow have the greatest difficulty to keep up with them, although they always run at full speed. No sooner do they receive the commission from the ghostly world than they begin to stamp with their feet, to cry aloud, to beseech for mercy, moving their hands and arms, shaking the ends of the 'lamba' or piece of cloth which crosses their bodies. Then they dart forward, shouting, dancing, leaping, and agitating themselves convulsively. Their most ordinary cry is 'Ekala!' and another, 'Izahay maikia!'—'We are in haste!' Generally a great crowd accompanies them, singing, clapping their hands, and beating a drum. This is, they say, in order to increase their excitement, and hasten their crisis.

"Although this malady especially attacks slaves, it, nevertheless, spares no rank. Thus a son of Radama and of Marie, his concubine, was seen suddenly to become a prey to these hallucinations of the Ramanenjana, and he commenced shouting, dancing, running like the rest. At the first moment of alarm the king himself set off in pursuit of his son; but in his precipitate career, having slightly wounded his leg, a horse was ordered to be kept saddled and bridled for him in case of future need.

"The course pursued by these possessed crowds is never very decided. Once, propelled by I know not what irresistible force, they spread themselves over the country, now on one side, now on another. Before the holy week they hastened to the tombs, where they danced and offered a piece of money.

"But on Palm Sunday a new fashion seized them, and this was to go into the lower part of the town and cut a sugar cane; this they brought back in triumph upon their shoulders and placed upon the stone sacred to Mahamasin in honour of Ranavolona. There they danced and agitated themselves with all their usual convulsions. After this they removed the cane and the piece of money, and returned from the stone, leaping and dancing as they had gone thither.

"One of the possessed carried a bottle filled with water upon his head, to drink from and sprinkle himself from by the way; and it is surprising to relate that, spite of his movements and convulsive evolutions, the bottle remained in equilibrium, you would have said that it must have been nailed and sealed to his skull.

"We have just learned that a new fancy has seized them, which is that they require every one to pull off their hats when they see the dancers pass by.

"Woe to all who refuse to obey this injunction, howsoever absurd it may be. Already more than one struggle has resulted, which poor Radama had hoped to avert by imposing a fine of 150 francs upon the refractory. In order not to infringe this new royal command, the greater number of the white population have determined to go out bareheaded. One of our fathers found himself exposed to a still more grave attack; this was nothing less than making him pull off his cassock. The Ramanenjana pretended that the colour of black blinds them. Fortunately the father escaped and re-entered his house without being obliged to appear in his shirt.

"The attacks of these *convulsionnaires* are not continuous. Various of them having made their grimaces before the sacred stone—it is upon this stone that the heir to the throne is mounted and presented to the people,—threw themselves into the water, then returned tranquilly to repose themselves till attacked by a new crisis. Others at times fall exhausted upon the roads and public places, there sleep and wake up cured. Some, however, remain ill several days before they are entirely freed from the disease. With others the evil is more tenacious and will last nearly a fortnight.

"During the attack, the patients recognise no one. They do not willingly reply to questions addressed to them. After the attack, if anything is remembered, it is vaguely and as an occurrence in a dream.

"One somewhat remarkable circumstance is that in the midst of their

evolutions the hands and feet of the patients remain cold as ice, whilst the rest of their body is bathed in perspiration, and their heads are as if boiling."

A. M. H. W.

In New Zealand, during the late war, a similar pagan outbreak has taken place. Men, evidently under the influence of the spirits of their departed priests, proclaiming war on the Christianity taught them by the missionaries, and reviving all their old Heathenism. Others, again, have said that the angels of the white men have come to them, with counter arguments and endeavours, so that there has been a furious war of spirits as well as of men.

Wild and infernal as is the spiritual outbreak just narrated, still, is it not in accordance with that Divine law which

"From seeming evil still educes good?"

#### FORESEEING SPIRIT DRAWING.

In the year 1859 I was attending school about seventy miles from home. One evening a room-mate suggested as a pastime that we should try which of us could draw the best profile of a lady. I assented, and we commenced. I am no artist—never was, and never pretended to be one; but now it seemed as though I could portray anything, any one, or whatever I pleased. My friend soon finished his drawing, and spoke to me (as he afterwards informed me), but I made no reply, and seemed intent upon my work. He could not make me raise my eyes, move a muscle, or divert my attention in any way; so, thinking that I was simply "contrary;" he left the room, and was away about three hours. When he returned, he said I was sitting in the same position as when he left me, but I was not drawing. I had finished my picture, my eyes were closed, and my face very pale. As for me, I remember having drawn the outline of my profile, and then all seems a blank. The next thing I can recollect was being lifted off my bed, two days after the occurrence just stated, to have my bed made. I was not able to go out of the house for sixteen days after that.

The portrait which I had drawn was considered by good judges a fine one, and, although drawn upon unsuitable paper, and with a single pencil, had every feature and expression as plainly and clearly delineated as any pencil drawing I ever saw. It resembled no one I had ever seen at the time, but it seemed to me as if I should some day see, love, and marry the original of my strange drawing.

During the remainder of my stay at school I looked for her in every concourse of people, but in vain! On returning home I was requested to show my "sleepy drawing" which I had written so much about. The first one who saw it exclaimed, "Why this is Miss —, our new neighbour!" (One of our neighbours, during my absence, had "sold out," and a man and his family from the East had taken possession.) Finally, all acknowledged that it was an exact likeness of the new-comer's daughter. The next day they (the neighbours) were invited to spend an evening at our house. They came—when behold! there was the very face I had been searching for, and the exact original of my drawing! She is now my wife. We loved each other "at first sight;" neither of us had ever loved before, and a happier couple are not often found. The profile is hanging in our parlour in a gilt frame, and is the subject of scrutiny for every visitor, and a wonder to all; but few know its true history.—K. N.—*American Phrenological Journal*.



## WHAT IS RELIGION?

CONSIDERED MORE ESPECIALLY IN REFERENCE TO THE  
QUESTION—IS SPIRITUALISM A NEW RELIGION?

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By THOMAS BREVIER.

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### III.

THE view of religion that has been presented is neither novel nor arbitrary; it is not simply the view of an individual or of a sect, but the common, fundamental basis, ground, and aim of all religion, whatever the differences may be in the additions made thereto, or in collateral issues, or in the means adapted as most conducive to the common end. "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." "I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness;" were the exclamations of the pious Hebrew Psalmist three thousand years since. And in a similar spirit a devout freethinker of to-day, who has essayed to trace what he calls *The Natural History of the Soul*, writes:—"The soul, weak and wandering, like a storm-driven bird, learns to nestle in the bosom of the Infinite One, seeking peace or strength, until at length love towards Him is born within it; then out of love springs insight—insight of his prior and greater love to it—whence the opening of a purifying, strengthening, and happy intercourse of the secret heart with Him. . . . It wants holiness and goodness like His own, that, being perfectly like Him, it may be indissolubly united to Him."\* Even the doctrine—so widely prevalent in the East—that the highest blessedness for man is in the absorption of the individual into the universal soul, is but the blind yearning of the secret soul for God—the dim, confused reading of the truth that Christianity has set forth in such luminous characters—that man's supreme good consists in being infilled with the Spirit of God in the ever-deepening receptivity and unfoldment of his faculties in their conformity to the Divine order. Hence his capacity of indefinite progress and spiritual growth

"For ever nearer to the life Divine."

"The subjects with which religion has to do, are God and man considered in the relation in which they stand to each other. It, consequently, includes all the philosophical questions which can

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\* *The Soul, Her Sorrows and Her Aspirations.* (Chap. IV.) By FRANCIS WILLIAM NEWMAN.

throw light upon that relation."\* It is thus both speculative and practical. The former deals only with the external, the superficial, and the doubtful or unknown; it belongs to the searching, curious intellect: the latter, in its deep and true sense, is the inmost soul and very life of religion, and is of paramount and universal obligation. It is distinctively concerned with the psychical and spiritual nature and all-pertaining and conducive to the highest life, progress, welfare, and destiny of this—the essential and immortal man. He is ever growing either more godlike or more brute-like and fiend-like: this conflict between good and evil within him is the Holy War that is ever waging, and the victory is won or lost, as he welcomes the armies of Immanuel, or as the hosts of Diabolus find lodgment and harbour in the citadel of the soul.

This fundamental principle—that religion has its root and ground in the soul; that its concern is with the spiritual nature, or with other things only as subordinate and related thereto—is the key to open the door of reconciliation of opposite and, apparently, conflicting statements; so that while holding to the series of negations in my first chapter, we may yet confidently and with equal truth maintain, without inconsistency, a series of counter affirmations—their verbal opposite. Thus, while asserting that ritualism—that, for instance, baptism, or immersion in water, *per se*, has in it nothing directly of the nature of religion, affecting only the body (or the spirit only so far as it may be reacted on through the body as its instrument), yet when it truly symbolises and is consciously used to signify the purification of the spirit—the cleansing it from all that may defile—the baptism of the soul in the sacred Jordan that shall make it fit for companionship with the spirits of the just, when it is a sign of membership in a spiritual and divine kingdom, it becomes an ordinance of religion, and one of great significance and force.†

So, too, the partaking in common of bread and wine in itself is but a means of bodily refreshment, and has in it no more religion than an ordinary luncheon; but as a memorial observance—an act of loving obedience of disciples to their common Lord; as representing that Divine bread and wine of truth and

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\* *Penny Cyclopædia*: Article, "Religion."—I quote from this, in preference to any professedly theological work; as, being intended for the general reader, it is presumably free from special bias, and may be taken as a faithful reflection of the commonly accepted view, which it has been my aim to set forth freed from all questions of controversy.

\* "External ceremonies are nothing more than signs of internal worship, which comprises all that is essential. These ceremonies are intended to impress ignorant man through the senses, and to nourish love in the recesses of the heart."—*Fenelon*.

love which came down from heaven to nourish the spiritual life; as the pledge of a common fellowship, of brotherhood, and equality before God, whatever the differing circumstances of temporal condition, it becomes a sacrament of religion—a proclamation of the intrinsic and surpassing worth of the spiritual over the merely animal nature.

So with bodily attitude and posture in worship. Kneeling, for instance, may be a formal, unmeaning act, as destitute of all special religious character as the act of riding in a railway carriage; but, if it proceeds from a corresponding spiritual act,—if the soul be on its knees,—if it be a true expression of its reverence, humility, and self-abasement before God for its conscious transgressions of the Divine law,—then it is a most fitting and religious act. So belief, as the mere outcome of an intellectual process, has little or nothing to do with religion—the spiritual life and growth in Divine things: the most profound theologian may be farther from God and godliness than the illiterate peasant, or those little children of whom Christ pronounced that of such were the kingdom of heaven. But belief may be—thank God it often is—much more than this. It is grounded in the moral nature—a necessary outgrowth from character; it is not mere speculation, but the insight derived from sympathy and from keeping the avenues of the soul open to the source of all truth; so verifying the Scripture that he that *doeth* the will of God shall know of the truth, whether it be of God. Every good seeks its corresponding truth, till they marry and become one. When belief thus becomes more and other than a mere notion or opinion,—not a mere product of the grinding of the intellectual mill, but a principle grounded in the spiritual nature, known and felt as truth, and working in harmony with all the higher movements of the mind and will, and the conduct of the life, it, too, is operative in the work of religion, blending naturally with reverence and trust, and becomes transmuted into Faith.

And thus with all things: in so far as they are merely temporal and physical, unconnected with the spiritual life, the element of religion is wanting; while all that relates to the soul and spirit of man, and aids his progress in the Divine life rightly appertains to it.

To speak of a *new* religion (save in a very qualified sense as implying only new methods or adaptations for the cultivation and expression of religious life) indicates a want of clear understanding, or an imperfect appreciation, of its true character. There may be new systems of theology—fresh bundles of opinion, speculation and modes of thought concerning God and things metaphysical; there is not, nor can be, a new religion, any more

than there can be a new geometry. There may be new *forms* of religion, as there may be new modes of constructing a mathematical demonstration; the nature of God, with which it is the object of religion to bring our human nature into perfect harmony, is no more subject to mutation than the properties of lines and circles. Religion is something to be experienced and lived; it is not now to be discovered or invented. The principle of religion is perfect, as God is perfect, but our realizations of it are most imperfect. Our "systems" are but the concrete forms in which it externalizes and seeks to express itself. They may well or ill perform their office; too often they become degraded and corrupt. In passing into the human soul, still more in passing into systems and churches, religion becomes narrowed and alloyed with the limitations and evils of our imperfect humanity; it is not the Divine but the human element that is at fault, mingling with, resisting, counteracting, and perverting it. When, to us, God is not the All-good, the All-righteous One, our type of human excellence also and of necessity falls into a lower and inferior mould; and so, too, as our lives become corrupt our spiritual sight is blinded. Only the pure in heart see God: the impure see but the magnified images of themselves—

Gods partial, vengeful, passionate, unjust,  
Whose attributes are hate, revenge, and lust.

But as the scales fall from the blinded eyes, as conscience is awakened from her deep lethargy, and the sanctities of life are reinstated, these earth-gods fall from their place of reverence, and the true God and Father reveals himself in the living temple, and Religion, like Hope,

Springs immortal in the breast.

Considerable vagueness and misapprehension sometimes arise from employing the term Spiritualism in different senses. Besides its scientific side, which we have not now to consider; on its moral side it is used to denote simply the belief in, or actual intercourse with, spiritual beings; in which sense it is a common term, including all varieties of faith and practice, from those of the Yezid, or Devil-worshipper, to the rational worship and devout communion with God, as a Spirit to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, and an enlightened, grateful recognition of spiritual ministry by His permission and appointment. Or, again, it is used as signifying the development and growth in true spiritual life—the indwelling Christ, or God in us, as it is variously expressed by different bodies in the Christian Church. But when Spiritualism is spoken of as a new religion, it is evident that it cannot be, and is not intended to be, understood

in either of these senses, but in the more restricted sense of the views based on *Modern Spiritualism*, or the series of phenomena of spirit-manifestation and intercourse which began in America about eighteen years since, and now extend over the length and breadth of both continents.

This enables us to bring the question to a plain, definite issue, for it becomes one not of speculation but of fact. If Modern Spiritualism dates from 1847, and constitutes a new religion, *wherein* is it *new*? What is there in religion since 1847 that there was not in it in 1846? Point out the *differentia*. The immortality of the soul; the existence of a spirit-world; the manifestations and ministry of spirits, and communion with them; the assurance that Divine mercy and spiritual progression are not limited to the natural world and the present life; that the future retribution is not arbitrary, penal, and vindictive, but the inevitable consequence of the acts here done and the character here formed—these are all ideas of the old world and of the old faith. Some of these articles may be controverted by particular bodies, but for the most part they are universally accepted. If there be anything else to urge as evidence that Spiritualism is a new religion, I should be glad to be informed of it; I have sought for it with some diligence but no success.

One point adverted to is much dwelt on; and though I cannot trace its logical connection with the proposition under review, it yet, on other grounds, deserves a somewhat extended consideration. It is held that the better knowledge of spirit-life and the grounds of religious duty and moral obligation presented by Modern Spiritualism justify the claim put forward in its behalf to be considered a new religion. Our place and state, our condition and surroundings in the spirit-world are determined by a law of moral gravitation—the attraction of spiritual affinity. In their intercourse with us spirits reveal, though it may be unconsciously, their several qualities and states: not alone the good, the loving, the true come to us, bright and joyful, inspiring us with joy and hope; but the cruel, the worldling, the profligate, the miser, the suicide also at times manifest themselves in their low and dark conditions, as the consequence of their past lives: their remorse and anguish, and still more their impenitence and their confirmed love of evil are terrible, and impress the mind by the exhibition of the reality as no mere preaching, however eloquent, can do. All this I fully admit and insist on. It is, indeed, not new that a man's works shall certainly follow him,—that as he soweth so shall he reap,—that his sins will surely find him out. Bishop Butler, in the last century, took this continuance of the consequences of our actions into the future life as the basis of his

famous work—*The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature*; and most of us may have read it also in our New Testaments. It is a truth of great moment, whether it be new or old; but its sufficiency as a motive power and its true place in religion is the matter immediately before us, and which I now proceed to consider.

Theologians and philosophers alike have been and are divided as to whether acts derive their chief value from their motive or their consequences. Those Spiritualists who adopt the theory I am controverting accept the latter view; I altogether dissent from it as a lower ground, and as debilitating to the moral powers; and hold that the results which it is supposed to favour, and which are expected from it, are unsustained by experience. On some occasions, and in small matters, a conviction and dread of consequences in the hereafter may act as a sedative and restraint; and in quiet times, when the current of life flows smoothly, or with weak and gentle natures, it may suffice for decorous behaviour and decent habits; but at the first strong gust of feeling it is too often swept away like thistle-down by the breeze; it is utterly powerless before the pent-up force of the strong, resolute will; and is burnt up like chaff in the consuming fires of passion. And what if it make a man prudent? Prudence is a desirable and useful minor virtue, but it is not religion, even at its best; and is a sorry substitute for its "pure serene ever-burning flame, pervading all our nature, animating all our acts, consuming our evil principles, and kindling us to everything good, great, and useful." It cannot even wrestle successfully with flesh and blood, or

Wake the better soul that slumbers;

how then can it withstand the fiery darts of its spiritual foes, the fierce assaults of temptation, or maintain the conflict when the enemy is already within the gates? Nay, even such poor strength as it has is drawn from supplies nearer home—from considerations that seem less remote—riches, honour, power, and fame; these things, and such as these, with most men are more potent than the dread of consequences in another world, however strong their intellectual conviction of these may be. And were it otherwise, how must it degrade the ministry of religion to employ it in offices like these! To inspire men with dread—to supplement the jail and the gallows—this, indeed, were hangman's work for religion; and scarce less degrading were it to religion to employ her to coax men (as children are coaxed with sugar-plums) by the promise that if they will but be good they shall certainly hereafter be made very comfortable and be well paid for it.

It is a terrible and mischievous burlesque of religion that would thus make it the minister to human selfishness, provided only that it be a little more subtle, enlightened, and far-sighted than ordinary, and coated with a thin varnish of sentiment.

The aim of religion is not to cultivate selfishness of any kind,—not to disguise it under fine names and fair pretences; but to deliver men from selfishness of every sort and degree, here and everywhere, now and at all times, in time and in eternity. Especially is this so of the religion of Christ. The religion of Paganism, as interpreted by the poets and in the heroes of classical antiquity, was characterized by vaunting self-assertion, self-seeking, self-glorification. That which Christ taught and illustrated in his life and by his acts, is the religion of ministry and service, of humility, self-denial—the most complete self-renunciation and sacrifice;—the reconciliation of the sinful soul to God by awakened contrite love, leading it to absolute surrender in all things to the Divine will. Not till this temper of heart is born in us is there even the beginning of religion. He that would be greatest must be the servant of all. He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for Christ's sake shall find it. Such are the Divine paradoxes of Christian verity.

To place the moral value of acts, not in their source, but in their results, is to make it dependent, not on character, but on the accident of position. If this were so, the single act of a statesman, who, by a stroke of the pen, affects the destinies of a nation, were, in the sight of God, of far greater worth than the whole lives of thousands of obscure, toiling, suffering men and women, who, in the small circle of daily duties, battle with sore temptation, and perform blessed acts of kindness and charity, known only by God and a few fellow-creatures moving in paths humble as their own; and Christ shewed an untutored and defective judgment in preferring the poor widow who cast but two mites into the treasury (though it was all she had) over the rich men who, out of their abundance, cast in much.

And what noble, heroic, devoted enterprise ever sprang, or ever can spring, from the calculations of a selfish prudence? Was it this which prompted Jeanne d' Arc, or Savonarola, or Luther, or Garibaldi to their great achievements? Was it personal regards, present or future, or a holy enthusiasm—a sublime sense of duty to be performed regardless of consequences, which made the early Christians rise superior to fear, and led them, rather than renounce Christ and worship idols, to brave the persecutions of pagan Rome; and impelled even timid and tender women rather to dare the raging lion or the raging flame? And as they thus laid the first secure foundations of liberty of conscience, has not

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also its superstructure been built up by those in later ages of temper like to theirs? Was it the thought of self and the devil, or the love of God and His truth, which impelled the Albigenses, the Vaudois, the Puritans, the Covenanters, the Huguenots, to battle to the death for liberty and the pure Gospel, as they understood it, and the rights of conscience? Was it not because they loved and revered something higher, holier than self—because they had trust in God, and to do His will was their very life, that, despite what may be intellectual errors in their creeds, they did so much for their own times and for posterity? Not until some unselfish love is enkindled—some secret spring of disinterested affection in the heart is touched, can the waters of spiritual life, the true divinely human life, flow freely over the arid deserts of the selfish, unsympathetic nature, as the water from the rock when touched by the prophet's rod.

While, then, I fully recognize that the life that now is in a great measure shapes the life that is to be and to endure, and that with us, to a corresponding extent, lies, therefore, the responsibility of our future lot, I yet demur to the fitness and sufficiency of this consideration as an operative power on the human soul to induct it into the religious life, or to sustain it in the sharp crises of temptation, or to win it to any work of magnanimity and generous devotion. I demur to the view that on this ground, or on any ground yet assigned, or, as far as I know, assignable, Spiritualism is a new religion; or that it can fairly sustain the claim to be a religion at all.

Do I, then, mean to affirm that Spiritualism has no bearing on religion, or none of any significance and value? That is as far from my thought as the other extreme; and I hope to point out briefly some of these bearings in my next and concluding chapter.

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#### MR. ADDISON'S REVELATIONS OF HIS MEDIUM TRICKS, THROUGH THE "MORNING STAR."

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THE *Morning Star* of the 16th April contains a long account [not we should think by Mr. James Greenwood, who is the gentleman who acquired such deserved fame by his visit as a casual to the Lambeth Workhouse, but more probably by Mr. Edmund Yates] of his introduction and visit to Mr. Addison, the friend of Mr. Sothern, and who is familiar to our readers as the medium *malgré lui*. Mr. Addison acquired this description in consequence of his personal denial as a gentleman, that his tricks were performed by the aid of mechanical contrivances,



or by confederates, and yet he said that he could get out of a box or a coffin screwed down, or make himself invisible. It was retorted, "you must be a medium then, if you can do these things," since which he has called himself the medium *malgré lui*. Mr. Coleman, who has frequently referred to Mr. Addison's performances, has several times put the issue in a very understandable way, by saying to Mr. Addison, "Either you have stated falsely when you assured your visitors that you had no mechanical aids for them to discover, and no confederates, or you must be a medium."

The revelations made by Mr. Addison of his whole method of procedure, to Mr. E. Yates, or whomever is the writer, and through the latter to the *Evening Star*, in which they occupy three columns, are a full and entire justification to Mr. Coleman in all that he has said of Mr. Addison, and although the writer gives as the heading of his article "the tricks of the mediums—a key to the art," his whole statement is one which conclusively proves to any impartial observer, that the Davenport and other manifestations could not possibly be accounted for by any of the modes, clever though they are, of Mr. Addison. It becomes a strangely curious phenomenon how, from the facts which he narrates, a contrary idea could have appeared possible to any man of high intelligence and honesty. The Davenport and other manifestations have been constantly produced in other persons' houses, and under circumstances which precluded the possibility of false bottoms to cabinets, duplicate ropes, strings, and sacks, sliding sides to boxes, or of an electric battery in the kitchen with communicating wires, to be worked by a servant below, according to a telegraphic order given by touching a knob on the floor. It becomes laughable, if it were not so sad, to see a gentleman wasting his faculties, and his money, on the inventions Mr. Addison has brought together in his house, when one knows that one has only to shew that none of the real manifestations have the advantage or disadvantage of those mechanical aids, in order to upset his entire conclusion, horse, foot, and artillery. We ourselves have repeatedly seen the Davenports in friends' drawing-rooms, in which they had never been before, and where there were no false bottoms, nor duplicate ropes, nor electrical machines, nor confederates. The same we can say of Mr. Home and of other mediums whom we have seen scores of times, when no electric battery would account for what was done. For all these cases, which are the every-day experience of Spiritualists, Mr. Addison's exhibition is of no value whatever, and we cannot but express our wonder that a person of ability to write as Mr. Yates does, supposing him to be the writer, should not see that it does not touch the real phenomena, unless and until he can shew that the

real phenomena are done in the same way. Were they done in the same way, Mr. Home, or Mrs. Marshall, or the Davenports would have to send their box of tricks beforehand to each house they visit, and there make all the previous preparations.

Mr. Addison has performed a feat moreover, which no medium has ever done, of at last shewing us all his tricks. It would have been of great advantage to his honour, if he had not on previous occasions made statements at variance with what now appears to be the fact regarding them; but no spirit medium has yet disclosed, nor we venture to add, can disclose how he produces his phenomena. We feel sure that there is no other house in London except Mr. Addison's, at 45, Marlborough Hill, St. John's Wood, which contains either a cabinet with a false bottom to it, or a box into which a man can get with a sliding side to it, or an electric battery with wires adjusted to produce the raps. If this be so, what becomes of the writer's idea, that he has obtained "a key to the art." On the contrary, he has demonstrated a discovery how the things are not done, not how they are done by mediums. And yet this silly revelation will go down well with the public, and the writer will reap the advantages of popular approval, although he has only put forward what he should have been ashamed of giving as a revelation of anything but of his and Mr. Addison's folly, in supposing that they were doing anything but wasting their time by devoting it to so trifling a purpose.

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### A SEANCE WITH MR. HOME.

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It is a reproach frequently brought against Spiritualism, that the presence of the sceptical impedes the action of its phenomena. Leaving to those who may have the time the task of arriving at some explanation of the fact, if it be one, we proceed to narrate briefly a few events which occurred at a *séance*, on the 30th January, given by Mrs. M—ll G—y, where Mr. Home was present, and where all the circle, if we mistake not, accepted Spiritualism as a reality. One gentleman, however, while he did so, had serious doubts as to the source of the phenomena, and as to the propriety of courting these developments.

We had not been long sitting at a large table in the front drawing-room, when the usual manifestations began, which increased with such force that the whole room was literally shaken. While the table palpitated violently by the power, the words, "Take six with you into the other room," were addressed by raps to Mr. Home, and caused those who were selected by

the spirits to adjourn into the back drawing-room, where they sat down at a table, having removed the lamp and opened the window, as desired by the spirit message. One of the six happened to be a lady whose daughter had been lately taken to the spirit-land, a girl who had been known on earth as "M——," the Hindostani name for pearl. To this lady the following message was spelled out, "Mother—Symbol is under mother's hand for"— She immediately told us that she felt something like a large bead under her hand, and when the light was brought in it was found to be an unattached pearl, which had never been bored, and that had been brought to our circle by no earthly hand. After another message respecting the future disposition of the pearl, they returned to the other room and rejoined the rest of the party. A large accordion was played with more than common skill while Mr. Home held it with one hand; once or twice we distinctly perceived that two hands were touching the keys, and "Home, sweet Home," which the young girl had formerly played upon the harp, was now played with variations upon the accordion. Answers were also given by the instrument instead of by raps.

In the midst of our conversation Mr. Home fell into a trance; this was, perhaps, the most salient feature of the *séance*, for while in this state, which must have lasted about an hour, he appeared to be influenced or possessed by the spirit friends who surrounded us, personating in manner those whom he had never seen, but who had been known by the several members of our circle. This was most remarkable in the case of one whom we will call by the name designated to her by Mr. Home, namely, that of Margaret, although she had only been known by that of Christy, as a servant in the family of one of the gentlemen present, and had been drowned forty years ago. Mr. Home went through the action of drowning, and gave such proofs of the identity of "Christy," that the son of her former master, who was the gentleman present, was fain to accept them as unmistakable. While entranced, Mr. Home also explained to us the difficulty that the spirits had experienced in bringing the pearl: it had passed through no less than three orders of spirits.

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"Margaret" had not come without an object to our *séance*; as there appeared to have been a slight suspicion of foul play in the manner in which she met her end, her aim was obviously to clear the character of a fellow-servant who had since joined her in the spirit-land.

L. M. GREGORY.

## LEGAL DECISION IN FAVOUR OF SPIRITUALISM.

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"SPIRITUALISM has made a triumph in the failure of the attempt to persecute Dr. Fitzgibbon, at Washington, which is a full offset to the Colchester Buffalo case. Dr. Fitzgibbon was arrested for "giving exhibitions of jugglery," without a license. The case was brought up for trial, and was postponed from day to day, to give the prosecution and the Judge an opportunity to examine the manifestations. At the first trial, Mr. T. Gales Forster addressed the Court at the request of Mr. Ashby Lloyd, the counsel for the defence, and at the close Judge Waters ordered the release of the Doctor, he having witnessed the phenomena, and being fully satisfied that neither necromancy nor jugglery was practised. The case created much interest, and the Spiritualists stood up in defence of Dr. Fitzgibbon, only asking a fair investigation. The result is before the world.

A complaint was also made against the Doctor, by the U. S. Collector of Internal Revenue, for not taking out a license; but after an examination by the Collector, he was released, Mr. Clepham, the Collector, deciding that the whole affair came under the head of public lectures.

Now here are two very grave and important decisions made in favour of Spiritualism; points of decision affecting the whole body politic, as well as of Spiritualists proper; decisions made by men in high authority—and yet the secular press will not this time allude to the matter. How different from the course when Mr. Colchester was convicted!"—*Banner of Light*, April 14, 1866.

We shall see if the English press, which extracted with eagerness the announcement of the conviction of Mr. Colchester, will be equally eager, or even honest enough, to notice the present case.

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EXTEMPORANEOUS ADDRESSES BY  
EMMA HARDINGE.

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THERE is a sentence in Tacitus which Thomas Carlyle designates "the most earnest, sad, and sternly-significant passage in writing known to him." It runs thus: "So, for the quieting of this rumour (of his having set fire to Rome), Nero judicially charged with the crime, and punished with most studied severities, that class, hated for their general wickedness, whom the vulgar call Christians. The originator of that name was one Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius suffered death by sentence of the procurator, Pontius Pilate. The baneful superstition, thereby repressed for the time, again broke out, not only over Judea, the native soil of that mischief, but in the city also, where from every side all atrocious and abominable things collect and flourish."

"Tacitus (adds Carlyle) was the wisest, most penetrating man of his generation; and to such depth and no deeper has he seen into this transaction, the most important that has occurred or can occur in the annals of mankind."

Well may this passage be called sad and sternly significant. The masses of mankind may indeed be somewhat wiser in the nineteenth than they were in the first century; but yet the same uncertainty in estimating present things and men prevails more or less in all times. And what is true in general of all present things and men is more especially true of those agencies which are connected with the inner life of man, and with the first principles on which society is built. For it is just these very causal elements which history tells us are least susceptible of measurement by recognized standards of criticism—mental, moral, or æsthetic. Though such causal elements may and must, like everything else, be necessary portions of the universal order of the world, yet the very fact that they call attention to themselves, whether attended with approval or disgust, proves that there is something abnormal in their character, which renders them the outlaws of criticism, and also of that confused, worthless echo of intelligent criticism termed “public opinion.”

Closely associated with the carnal elements in active operation at present upon the mind of Christendom is, we feel perfectly sure, the volume which lies before us, consisting of the first seven addresses delivered by Miss Emma Hardinge in Harley Street, between November 6th and December 18th. Yet, probably, few of the leading critics of the day will condescend to notice it; and those who do so will be certain for the most part to pass an adverse judgment upon it. We have slowly and unwillingly learnt by painful experience how hostile is the average English mind to all new forms of truth. We fancy that scarcely any amount of purblind prejudice would any more excite our wonder. These lectures abound with novel forms, both of scientific and religious truth, and are therefore certain to arouse the strongest conservative animosity. This will be only too glad to seize upon any pretext, however paltry, for depreciating remark, and therefore we much regret that the pages of a book, in many respects invaluable, should be disfigured by some mechanical and verbal errors which a careful correction of the press should have removed. Except in the presence of these trifling blemishes, we consider the book deserving of almost unqualified praise. Its close and vigorous reasoning, the high poetical beauty and rhetorical power of many passages, and the generally healthy religious tone pervading the whole, cannot fail to render it interesting to all intelligent Spiritualists.

These Addresses are introduced by a judicious and eloquent preface from the pen of Mr. Alfred Watts, wherein he asserts that they will be found to contain a consistent and well-harmonized body of principles. It is this characteristic which

constitutes their great value ; and we believe that we shall best contribute to our readers' gratification by presenting them with a brief analysis of these principles, employing, as far as possible, Miss Hardinge's own language ; and we hope that some may thus be induced to make themselves acquainted with the fuller exposition of such valuable outlines of a spiritual philosophy. In a single article we can only do them scant justice. In considering that some of the subjects of the lectures were chosen at the time, and that they were addressed to most miscellaneous audiences, it is remarkable that they are almost entirely free from tautology, and that while they admit of systematic arrangement, they will be seen to cover a very large field of thought.

The fundamental principles of the lecturer's philosophy are those enunciated in the discourse which treats of the nature of spirit. It assumes the form of a commentary on the following sentences which Miss Hardinge is content to adopt as a species of primitive creed. " I believe in a spiritual origin for all things ; I believe that the totality of all being is Infinite and Eternal ; I call it in totality, ' God,' ' Creator,' ' Father ;' I believe that in every age, and amongst all people of earth, the presence and inspiration of God has been realised in the systems known as religions ; I believe that matter is a proceeding from God, being the passive or negative pole of which spirit (which is in its totality God) is the active, positive and creative power. . . . I believe in a Trinity proceeding from the Infinite, composed of spirit, which is mind—of life, which is magnetism—and of matter, which is body."

Now, finite man cannot comprehend the Infinite. But one emanation or portion of the eternal spirit he can in some measure understand, and this is himself, his own spirit. And by studying this he may become acquainted with the realm of spiritual being beyond himself. We may, for example, arrive at reliable conclusions as to the advent of spirit upon this planet, as revealed in earth's natural history.

By the experiences of the days you know, judge of the ancient age you know not of. Now you can realize that where the proud and beautiful queen cities of the West throng with busy life, were once outstretched the prairie and the silent forest, the unwitnessed bloom of flowers and ungathered wealth of fruits ; even so, in the dim past ages of this earth's creation, in the period when in the throes of time this planet first was born, God's mind, God's spirit, and God's presence was as imminent then, as though his images in human form had dotted the earth with incarnate spirits as now. You look upon the works of human hands to-day, behold great princely palaces, Gothic cathedrals, and splendid works of art : you know all these were reared up by human hands—built by the nameless dead. Who questions that human souls were the workmen's motive power ? Who doubts that human minds contrived the forms ? As you look upon every work of art throughout this earth, it needs not that you should know its author, or learn the age, or height, or form of him who executed it ; it is in itself a token to your sense that the workman was a man, and that

man a spirit. Even such evidence as this does the machinery of the old earth present you with, of the master mind in the universe—the universal soul in matter—the mighty alchemist who, in the laboratory of ages reduplicated the image of himself in us his children, so soon as in the fulness of time, matter was sublimated from the inorganic rock to the organism of plant, and fish, and beast, and bird, and at last in creation's apex—the microcosm Man.

From the starting point of animated life, the rudest animals we see display the elements of that volition which is the highest and special attribute of spirit. I do not say that in the lower creatures we have the evidence of that completed power which in the human being we call soul, but I do say that even from the inorganic rock, which age after age elaborated and prepared, matter in higher and more various forms was given forth until it gave birth, by decomposition, chemical changes, and recomposition, to the vegetable world. From the points when these two combining with atmosphere and water, heat, light, electricity, and moved on by the Creative Spirit, produced at last forms of animal life, you have successions of graduated and progressive forms, ending at last in the first manifestation of *spirit in matter*, in the rudimental shape of that instinct which enables a form of matter by locomotion to move from place to place. Humble as is this power, it still is evidence of some intelligence or will which guides those movements, and in this you have the first faint dawn of thought. Pass onward through time's cycles, and you will discover, from the poor mollusca and the humble radiata, up through the various invertebrate creatures to the vertebrate, one ascending prophecy of the coming sovereign—Man. From the fishes of the sea to amphibious creatures, from the cold-blooded reptile to the forest beast and atmospheric bird, form, matter, and will ascend higher and yet higher. Every form of life seems struggling to assume nobler proportions, until the spine (that spine, which as the continued column of the mighty brain, the centre of nerve-power and seat of mind, stands representative of nature's highest organisms) the spine no more runs laterally along the earth, but stands erect and drinks in the solar ray, in that triumphant and commanding attitude which draws the line of demarcation between the man and animal. The glorious gift of speech, too, defines the grand ascent of the sovereign ruler above the subject beast, and predicates a power of intellect, subserved by this faculty of interchanging thought, which marks the power of Godlike mind, of which speech is an attribute but thought is the substance. In the fulness of time, then, nature prepared for and received her sovereign—Man.

In him we find a compendium of all the powers of lower creatures. In the glorious gift of human reason is the assemblage of all the fragments of intellect, manifest in the varied instincts of the animal kingdom. Having traced to the triumphant progress of the ages nature elaborating God's glorious image—man; having perceived his advent on earth, preceded by prepared stages of creation, we face the startling query, What is the next and higher order of beings, and may not man himself be naught but a prophecy of some more noble creature, destined to succeed him? To this it may be answered—

That we, who have seen, and heard, and felt the presence of the resurrected soul of man, rising from out the ashes of the tomb to the glorious light of immortal youth and beauty, have in our spiritual natures discovered the next link in God's harmonious chain of being to ourselves? That such a link exists, connecting man with higher and even the highest of the intelligences of creation's prophetic nature—history, reason, and all analogies declare. Then such a link is found, and, in the ascended spirit of the dead, that link is manifest.

Another question often suggested is this—Is spirit outworked by matter as a chemical result of the atomic action, or is spirit

an original element and matter a mere temporary result of the operations of spirit as the producing cause?

To this question Miss Hardinge replies by the following suggestive illustration:—

Here I stand, and can this hand of mine uprear the roof above me? This hand is the matter that we boast of—what can it do? Nothing of itself; absolutely nothing. As an entity moved by will, or moved *alone* by will, in its feebleness, this hand is nothing but a subject of my spirit. I have two slaves whom I will summon: their names are Machinery and the Printing-press. My spirit calls these into operation, and mark the result. By labour-saving machinery I shall build me mighty palaces, vast Gothic cathedrals, splendid galleries, and enormous piles of matter; I may cover the world with a building, which Titans may inhabit, by labour-saving machinery! By this, moreover, I may stand here, the denizen of some poor and lowly cottage, but I shall send to China for my tea, to Java for my coffee, to the Islands of the Sea for my spices, to Golconda for my diamonds, to Ceylon for my pearls, to the furthest arctic shores for my furs, to the tropics for the plumage of gorgeous birds, rare plants, and delicious fruits. I shall put a girdle round the earth, and north, south, east, and west shall send me tributes of all they have: I shall not move from out my place, for my slave, Machinery, shall bring me all this riches.

But more than even this: 'tis not only that I can command the elements, and compel lightning, and fire, and earth, and air, and water to do all this for me, I can sit at my own fireside and learn how ancient men lived and dwelt, and what they did, and what they said, and what their cities were; I shall recall the most distant periods of the past; nothing shall be hid from me; the history of all living creatures for me shall be disclosed; all peoples and all nations have written their records for me, and the printing-press shall bring it to my table, till I find that man is a gigantic animal, with a memory extending back into all the ages of the past; and all this is mine, and re-produced for me at the cost again of a few poor coins, till the history of all human experiences are at my command, and become my knowledge, through my slave, the Printing-press. And this, too, is my power—“*the power of atoms.*” My power! This hand, which cannot wield one block of the material that I have spoken of; this eye, which cannot penetrate beyond this chamber; this foot, which cannot measure above a mile of space beyond it; this feeble, fragile form, which the first summer's heat or winter's cold may destroy; this form, which a hundred years hence shall be dust and ashes, scattered to the four winds of heaven; this crumbling form, which even the painter's canvas or the sculptor's bronze and marble could not perpetuate an image of above a few dim years!—is this the power which thus can rule the earth, conquer the elements, and defy even time and space, until by machinery we can almost re-create the world, and by the printing-press record the tale to every living creature? Poor crumbling dust! No power of thine can effect one stroke of this magic labour. What can these hands accomplish unmoved by the master mind within? What can these atoms do unlighted by the mighty soul which alone redeems their darkness from the grave? The soul is the power, the soul the motor—soul alone the workman. Think, too, what that soul shall be, when these atoms are no more! I stand on the mountain height that overlooks the awful rush of great Niagara; I hear the hoarse roar of its thundering voice, and ask how long that tongue of flood has shouted its anthem of terror to the winds? They tell me that for thirty thousand years, at the very least, these mad waters have torn their way through miles of solid rock to the chasm of awe where they now pour down their foaming mass to the river-bed below.

Perhaps this tale is true! But if the great flood has indeed been thirty thousand years carving its way to its present rifted bed, where shall it be in thirty thousand years to come? Is not the spirit of change even now treading with silent footprints the writhing rapids, the struggling foam, the rugged rock, and the leaping torrent, and writing with the sure but ineffacable lines of destiny—“Niagara must die!” The rapids' murmuring wail shall be hushed;



the cataracts' anthem of thunder cease; the mountain height be levelled with the dust; the rocks all crumbled into earth; and flower enamelled grasses, stirred by the summer's breezes, rest tranquilly above the grave of dead Niagara—but *I shall live for ever!* Thirty thousand years—it may be thirty millions hence, when every memory of the ancient world is lost, and Niagara's very name "is not," I shall still be living—for I am part of Alpha and Omega, of the indestructible nature of Him "that liveth, and was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore,"

You, as Spiritualists, have turned a new page in the magnificent volume of effects in creation, whose title is "Spirit," "Spirit—the Alpha and the Omega," and in this revelation we discover the promise fulfilled that an angel hand should "break the seventh seal which veils the mystery of God." Small, and to some of us even insignificant, as seems the witness of the spirit-circle, its phenomenal gleams are lights which reveal, in their aggregate, these solemn truths unto us. There we behold foregleams of the powers of soul, which so vastly do transcend the laws of matter. That soul's continued existence and triumph over death; our own embodied spirit's power of communication with the invisible world around us, and its various occult forces. Clairvoyance, clairaudience, prophecy, trance, vision, psychometry, and magnetic healing. How grand and wonderful appears the soul, invested even in its earthly prison-house with all these gleams of powers so full of glorious promise of what we shall be, when the prison gates of matter open wide and set the spirit free!

Some general knowledge of the attributes of spirit prepares us to investigate the character of the connection between the natural and spiritual worlds; and here, again, we are compelled to turn our eyes inward, and contemplate the wonderful and subtle organism which constitutes the apex of created being—man. There is scarcely an element of matter, a single force, or form of motion—scarcely an idea incarnate in being which is not represented in the human body. It is there that all the sciences of chemistry, mechanics, hydrostatics, pneumatics, acoustics, optics, meet with all their most varied and exquisite illustrations. But glorious as is this human body, sublime as are its powers, behold it parted from its spiritual tenant, and lying at our feet a natural body only! A few short days pass over it, and what does it become?

When we contemplate the wonderful attributes of mind, to which no obstacles of time or space can form an horizon,—of mind that rolls back the curtain of the past, and pierces with the eye of science through the long chain of causation to the untried future; when we consider how the empire of soul, by knowledge penetrates the mysteries of almost illimitable space, and compare all this with the little pigmy form that shrinks in the biting blast of winter, and faints beneath the scorching heat of summer;—when we remember that the wondrous power that makes this form its instrument, is related to its fragile tenement by a thread so yet more fragile that the prick of a dagger's point, the atom of a poisonous substance, a flash of heaven's fire, or the stumbling of a foot,—that these, or less than these would quench the light and make this demi-god a lifeless clod of inert powerless earth,—surely we must conclude that the vital spark is something more than chemistry; that the glorious form, how beautiful soever it be, which we call Man, when vitalized by spirit, which ALONE IS MAN, when robbed of this, is but man's cast-off garment! And still the material tenement is beautiful, and so admirably adapted to outwork the spirit's purposes, that we may well forgive the Materialist for sometimes thinking it is God, instead of God's image only.

Philosophy has searched with the Rosicrucian; toiled with the Alchemist,

and speculated with the sage, to unlock the wondrous mystery of life,—and still that one great problem has baffled all his science to discover. We know there is a line that connects the natural and the spiritual, for we are standing on the threshold of the very time that holds this problem solved; we stand there with Mesmer and behold the effects of life passing from form to form. In faith and knowledge too, in this bright day of spiritual revelation, we stand there with Swedenborg, and behold once more the clairvoyant eye of spirit piercing the obstacles of matter, traversing worlds of space, and revealing states and conditions of that vast hereafter which had been at best a hope; almost a faith, but has now become a knowledge. Those familiar with the writings of the seer of Sweden will recollect he told us there was a connecting link between mind and matter, visible to his spiritual eye; that there was a relation binding the natural to the spiritual body, which shone to him in such marked connection that he described it as a cord, which seemed to unite the soul and body; one which is never broken except at death. There are flitting lights of revelation too, gleaming amidst the dark tales of witchcraft, which inform us that there is a shade or spectral form, which goes out from the organism of matter, and appears from time to time in distant places, and though not a disembodied soul, appears in the shape the soul must wear in the body. Amidst the wildest superstitions, and associated with the grossest forms of folly, stigmatized as supernaturalism, there are still suggestions of this strange and mystic link, half shadow and half substance, such as Plato might have meant by the "sensuous soul" he writes of, or the ancient poet sought to represent when he pictured "shades," "not spirit nor yet body," wandering like Achilles in the realm of shadows; *something hovering between the nether and the upper worlds*. But the day of simple speculation on these themes is passing fast away.

Swedenborg, Hahnemann, and Mesmer, have each thrown a light upon the mysterious link which binds together the unintelligent atoms of matter and the intelligent will. All who are familiar with the phenomena of the spirit-circle know that this link exists, and they trace its manifestations as obviously as they would electrical phenomena. All the incidents relating to it, when gathered together, determine us to give to that invisible substance, which combines the natural and spiritual worlds, the name of magnetism.

Magnetism! That mighty force by which is upheld and balanced in heaven's eternal scales the countless gem-like worlds that swing in space. Magnetism! The force which moves in a dual mode by attraction and repulsion; by attraction gathering up the atoms of matter and aggregating them into worlds; by repulsion determining the place of each world, and preventing the mighty mass cohering into a centre. Magnetism is that power which, outworking as His tool the Eternal's will, formed and determined the place of every atom pervading even the restless ocean wave, the lashing tempest, and the roaring storm; amidst the winds and sighing breezes it arranges each atom in its place, and outworks throughout the universe inevitable law.

The relation between the natural and the spiritual is a theme, so grand that whilst it carries us into arcana, where we veil our faces, and worship trembling, we yet in response to the enquiries of the hour, by searching God's Scriptures in His universal gospel—Nature, find that the relations between the natural and the spiritual subsist throughout the whole realm of being; that the link that connects them is that which we call in the lightning of the skies "electricity;" in the physical world, "magnetism;" and in the animal kingdom, "life." The grand trinity then of matter, life, and spirit, constitutes humanity, and the larger and grander trinity of these three elements—is THE UNIVERSE.

In a lecture entitled "The Philosophy of the Spirit-Circle," Miss Hardinge applies the foregoing principles to explain the

peculiar conditions necessary for the existence of the singular powers of late denominated mediumistic, but which, under other names, have been exercised from time immemorial. She says,

Admitting that God's laws are adequate to define the spiritual as well as the natural body of history, and that no miracle or transcendence of natural law can exist, there remains but one mode of explaining the phenomena of the ages, and that would seem to be, by the discovery of some occult force in nature sufficiently potential and applicable to our case, to cover its phenomenal manifestations. It is believed that such a force was known to the ancients, and by them sufficiently understood to be reduced to a science, practised under the title of "magic," in the system of which the occult powers of crystals, vapours, stones, and drugs, the influences of certain human and even animal organisms, giving forth magnetism, and thereby creating the power to fascinate, enchant, control the body, and sometimes the mind, of certain susceptible subjects, produced that science of mysticism vaguely defined in later times as "magic."

I shall not discuss the question of how far these practices are opposed to the evident spontaneity of prophetic, apostolic, and modern mediumistic gifts, for despite the splendid halo which antiquity throws around the forms of the long ago—despite the glorious light of oriental imagery in which the seers of Judaic inspiration are enwrapped—the line of demarcation to the cold investigating eye of science cannot be found between the old and new, where the causes and effects alike cohere in the realm of nature, and in the domain of laws immutable and continuous through all ages. Prophets, seers, and apostles of old were priests of the order of Melchisedec, deriving their office from neither father nor mother, nor from the ordination of human hands, but from the great fountain and source of spiritual life, and St. Paul concludes that these powers were direct gifts of the spirit from God. When we investigate the writings of this noble spiritual teacher and compare them with the mode in which modern manifestations are produced, and remark in each a spontaneity which appears to defy all attempts at explanation from art or science, we are fain to come to the conclusion that had our mediums lived 3,000 years ago, they might have stood robed in the splendid mantles of antiquity on the same pinnacles of awful reverence which enshrine the sacred heads of the seers of old. The question then narrows itself down to a consideration of what may be the law of modern mediumship, since we affirm that law it is which governs the manifestations of spiritual communion with earth, or the relations between the visible and invisible worlds.

The manifestations of the spirit-circle are susceptible of classification into physical and mental phenomena, and involve physical and mental states of a special character on the part of the mediums. These states seem to be produced partly from conditions existing in the *surroundings* of the mediums, and partly from some occult force *in themselves* which enables a world of invisible beings to use their organisms as telegraphic instruments for the communication of their wishes, purposes, and powers.

Having got thus far, the lecturer digresses for a moment to describe in a wonderfully beautiful passage (which, did our space admit, we would fain transcribe) the method in which one universal force, acting in the two modes of attraction and repulsion, elaborates every form and fulfils every function of created life.

It is this element which in the modes of attraction and repulsion extends the little microscopic atom, into the magnificent structure of manhood—in one

word, it is *LIFE*; we call it vaguely electricity, magnetism, nerve aura, or nerve force, it is one and the same element throughout, though varied in correspondence with the media of the atoms through which it is manifested; even as the sunbeam falling on the rose, quickens into life, and strengthens by its influence the exquisite colour and delicious fragrance of this queen of flowers; yet, the self-same sunbeam lighting on the festering heap of corruption by the wayside, generates miasma, fever, and the poisonous exhalations which destroy and pollute the life of the beautiful, which its own force has aided to stimulate into being. Thus this magnetic power becomes life and death by its medium of manifestation. 'Tis motion quickening all things into being, whether for good or evil, and its results are determined by the nature of the atoms in which it is exhibited, and this is the electricity of modern science, and the force by which the spiritual and natural body combined in man forms a battery and produces the phenomena that we call "*LIFE*." . . . .

If the brain generates an excess of magnetic life, and this be peculiarly concentrated in the direction of the intellectual organs, such persons become psychologists, great statesmen, and the master-minds of life. Should it be diffused throughout the whole physical system, it renders the subject in his physique strong, muscular and powerful. Should its energetic action be limited to certain organs of the brain alone, then you have those manifestations of special intellect and predominance of intellectual gifts, which single men out as poets, painters, musicians, and inventors.

The lecturer finds the most marked evidence that the brain generates that quality of magnetism called *negative*. In some individuals the magnetic force appears to be unequally distributed throughout the system; it appears in excess in some directions, in deficiency in others.

A general lack of balance is perceived either in the physical, intellectual, or moral departments of such persons—sometimes in all; but the inequality of temperament thus produced, invariably manifests itself in an unusual degree of nervous irritability, extreme sensitiveness, and very constantly in that high degree of susceptibility to all electric or magnetic forces in the visible and invisible worlds, as to produce the phenomena which you now call in modern phrase spirit-mediumship.

Suffer your minds to recall your own personal experiences of those who have been distinguished amongst you as mediums, and you will remember them as remarkably susceptible through all the various organs of the senses, to atmospheric changes, impressions made on them through sight, sound, taste, and smell, but above all susceptible in the highest degree to influences conveyed by various human beings, through what is called their magnetic sphere. These "*Sensitives*" we now call "*Spirit-mediums*;" and spirit-mediums they become—or telegraphic instruments for spirits, because they by their negative quality of magnetism form good batteries for the positive magnetisms of their operators to work with. Now assuming that all human organisms are susceptible of classification into characteristic groups, so do we find the phenomena manifest through spirit-mediums resolving themselves into different phases of power.

Thus we find with some the energy of the magnetic life acts upon the back brain or cerebellum, and produces that strong, gross, earthly character of magnetism which enables spirits to produce manifestations of a sort which distinguishes the mediums for "*physical force*" phenomena. We find in other mediumistic persons, cause to believe that the excess of the magnetic life clusters about certain organs which, although not manifesting themselves in specialties of individual character, creates tendencies of mind which become, by mediumship, developed in the direction of certain arts and sciences, productive of "*gifts*" for tongues, poetry, invention, painting, music, or other intellectual attainments, which, if latent in the mind, are evoked and called forth by mediumship or the power of spiritual control. It is as if the fire of heaven kindled the incense laid upon the altar of the soul, and quickening powers held dormant

in the mind result in developing mediums for some special gift of an intellectual character. There are others, again, where magnetism, though generated in excess, passes off so rapidly that the life-principle itself becomes deficient, rendering the physique deprived of magnetic life, frail, and physically rather than intellectually unbalanced; these persons form often good spirit-mediums, but their gifts are most commonly found in the direction of spirit-sight, or clairvoyance: the form or prison-house of matter is not strong enough to restrain the spirit and hold it within its earthly shrine. It is in such fragile tenements, too weak to restrain the ever-aspiring spirit, that the soul goes forth, and produces the strange phenomena of unaccountable visions, seership, and somnambulism. We commonly find these tendencies of spiritual exaltation associated with a frail physique, though not invariably so, and thus it is we are apt in our ignorance to mistake effects for causes, and attribute a state of feeble health to mediumship—a mediumship which often results from lack of physical strength, though rarely produces it by its exercise, except in cases where the life-principle is rapidly parted with: when the form loses what the spirit gains in power. Mediumship, as it at present exists, in spontaneity rather than as the result of a scientific system regulated by knowledge, results from lack of power in the atoms of matter to retain and concentrate the life-principle generated in the nervous system in excess, and used as a magnetic battery for the purpose of working a spiritual telegraph.

Every one is familiar with the electro-galvanic battery, constructed for the production of that same electricity or magnetism of which we have been discoursing.

We take a plate of copper and one of zinc; these metals associated in the battery are in what is called opposite states of electricity. The one is capable of giving off attractive the other repulsive force. The one is the positive the other the negative; the one the plus the other the minus. We place between these two a fluid which has a stronger affinity for one of the metals than the other; that is, it acts with more energy in decomposing one than the other of the plates, and thus magnetism is generated—whether it be in the voltaic pile or the simple electro-galvanic battery—for the generation of electric power three elements, consisting of two metallic plates or substances in opposite states of electricity, and a medium or fluid between the two is always required.

The phenomena resulting from these combinations are various in proportion to the construction of the instrument for generating force. Sometimes the results are those tiny sounds which interpret the thoughts of potentates and kings, and put a lightning girdle round the world, sending mind's messages from pole to pole. Sometimes the battery gives off continued force, capable of being increased until it can move ponderable bodies; or it shall be the machine which, like the philosopher's stone, shall change metals from one plate to another, in the process of electrotyping, or it may give off sparks of electricity that shall condense invisible gases into water, and this again into crystals, changing from the invisible to the visible, and performing all the functions of creation from the extreme of rarefaction to the extreme of condensation, until the mind, contemplating in amazement the possibilities which this wondrous magician electricity suggests, beholds in imagination the tool by which a world has been condensed from the unparticled elements of primeval states of matter, and contemplates the agency by which a process of chemical decomposition might reduce a planet again to inorganic and chaotic void.

You cannot point to one single function of being, nor one form of motion known in the universe, where electricity is not the tool, and where its action is not manifest as the force by which primordial elements have been reduced to forms by being placed in chemical affinities with one another. Now place the spiritual body of the medium as the copper, and the spiritual body of the disembodied soul as the zinc, and the atmosphere as the solution between them, and your mediumistic battery is complete. And wherefore, if the simple forms of matter which man's mighty and controlling spirit can act upon—wherefore, if the subjects of the soul can thus be made to produce all the wondrous phe-

nomena that re-create a world, and make man in truth the image of his Creator, with all the attributes and functions of the Infinite represented in his finality—wherefore, if man is thus gifted to act upon matter, shall not himself, the grandest of all magnets; himself, the microcosm of all lower forms of matter; himself only subject to God and the angels—why shall not he form a better battery than any of the mere fragments of matter which are all combined within himself? He does so, and thus arranges and classifies the entire of the phenomena into the science of modern Spiritualism.

In considering the subtle and ill-understood character of this mediumistic force, we may shrink back aghast from the difficulties that seem to surround the subject, and question whether this knowledge may not be too intangible for us to attain to, but still I affirm that it is a branch of natural law, as surely susceptible of being reduced to a system as any other branch of philosophic lore which deals with the realm of imponderables for its subject. We know that any lack of chemical adaptation in our galvanic battery will neutralize the effects that it might produce: even so of the more sublimated battery formed of spiritual essences. A single wave of disturbance in the atmosphere around the spirit-medium affects the solution between the magnetic plates of the spiritual bodies. Whensoever these are changed, look for change in their phenomenal manifestations. Still more potential are the human magnetisms of those who approach the medium. Some bring refracted rays, like sunlight passing through a prism. If sunlight is broken into many varying hues by refraction, must not magnetic rays, emitted from each one's form, be similarly subject to similar disturbances? And thus it is that in the unnoted failure of the spirit battery you seek for truth, and falsehood answers you—the sun of truth is passing through a prism; its rays are broken, and appear no more as a pure white light, but in the parti-coloured hues of falsehood, and it is far more often mistake and lack of necessary condition than wilful design that perverts the truth of spirit revelations; nor is it so much a moral or intellectual as a physical organism that forms the prism; for that organism is the grand compendium of all physical forces, and hence magnetism flowing from these is chiefly characteristic of physical conditions. Without arrogating to ourselves any other power of instruction on these most momentous questions than that of pointing to the subjects for investigation, we may venture to say we have shewn enough to justify assertion that a new and glorious field for scientific search is opening up to man in the philosophy of the spirit-circle, and that none have the right to demand exact and satisfactory phenomena until they can, by knowledge, take part in their production, and aid by good conditions in the working of the battery.

I must now offer a few words more in explanation of the nature of spirit-mediumship. I have stated that the medium is but a plate in the spiritual battery, and in speaking of this instrument, I speak of *copper*, and not *gold* or *diamonds*; carrying out this analogy yet farther, I speak of a metal capable of generating magnetic force. Can you therefore require from the organism whose very lack of balance constitutes its force, all the concentrated powers of intellect or spiritual excellence, which would use up the magnetic life to fashion rather than give it off? You may urge that this plea, if analyzed, would prove that spiritual gifts may be an evil rather than a blessing, and scarcely think their gift is one indeed “to covet after.” I answer you, that God's facts are manifest as much in the noisome insect as they are in the fairest forms of nature. God's facts are still facts, whether they are understood by you or not; and whatsoever of criminality, moral obliquity, or error exists in the world, all has its place, and all is full of meaning, could we but read the page aright.

As yet we have dealt with only three of seven lectures, but the space which we feel justified in occupying is, we are sorry to say, nearly exhausted. We must be content to indicate very briefly the manner in which the foregoing principles are employed to illustrate that element of the marvellous and mysterious which forms so important a portion of the history of the past.

One lecture, containing a comprehensive review of ancient magic, points out the distinction between those occult powers of man brought into action by various mechanical means, such as drugs, rapid movements, music, &c., but doubtless often intensified by spiritual assistance, and the spiritual gifts of modern times, which are for the most part of a spontaneous character, and not induced by voluntary submission to abnormal conditions. Another address, which we especially commend to our readers as a striking example of logical acumen and rhetorical tact, is devoted to proving that no intelligible distinction can be drawn between those marvels recorded in the Old Testament, and commonly regarded with veneration, on the one hand, and the so-called witchcraft and necromancy of the same period, on the other; while the phenomena of Modern Spiritualism are shewn to be closely connected with both. The relation assumed to exist between Modern Spiritualism and the revelation of the Divine will in the person and words of Jesus Christ is set forth in a lecture already printed in this magazine. A final address on "Hades" is the most forcible appeal to the dictates of the heart in vindication of the certainty of communion with the departed that we remember to have met with. The argument is old enough, but its mode of presentation, at least, is fresh and beautiful.

We must now draw our analysis of this remarkable volume to a close. Perhaps there may be nothing absolutely new in it, but we know of none which contains within the same space so suggestive and eloquent an exposition of the philosophy of Spiritualism. We should not omit to notice that, subjoined to several of these lectures, are examples of the wonderful facility and effectiveness with which Miss Hardinge is ever ready to answer any questions proposed to her relating to her subject. Another series of Addresses is in course of publication, and we hope will have an extensive circulation, which chiefly consists of such answers given at a moment's notice to questions selected at hazard, many of them of the most interesting but subtle and perplexing nature.

S. E. B.

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On Sunday Evening, the 22nd inst., Miss EMMA HARDINGE delivered at the Institution, Cleveland Street, Fitzroy Square, a most eloquent and impressive discourse on "The Progress and Destiny of the Soul." The hall was crowded in every part, and notwithstanding that its habitual attendants are mainly secularists, the lecture was most enthusiastically received. Cannot the Spiritualists in this country take steps to retain the valuable services of this gifted lady among us for at least some considerable time. We would strongly urge all who are able to do so to attend the lectures announced for delivery by her at the Marylebone Institution, Edward Street, Portman Square.

## THE LATE MR. EDWARD BROTHERTON, OF MANCHESTER.

WE find the following appreciative notice in the *Manchester Guardian* of 24th March last:—

With sincere regret we announce the death of Mr. E. Brotherton, which occurred yesterday at noon, after a few days' illness. To the readers of this journal the deceased was perhaps best known as the writer of two or three series of letters, under the signature of "E. B.," on the subject of education. The earnest eloquence with which Mr. Brotherton pleaded the cause of popular education attracted considerable attention in this city, and led to the establishment of the Education Aid Society, of which he may be said to have been the founder, as he afterwards became the guiding spirit. On retiring from business, and after spending the first year or two of his leisure in continental travel, he returned to Manchester to devote himself with all his energy to a life of quiet usefulness. He studied the statistics of popular education, and having convinced himself of the inadequacy of the existing system to meet educational wants, he set himself to the task of doing all that his powers could accomplish to remedy the evil. During the few years that he has been spared to labour at this task of love he manifested a rare capacity for the work. Endowed with much winning grace of manner and temper, which those who knew him long and intimately never saw ruffled, he yet possessed determination and perseverance which opposition could not diminish. Those who have had the privilege of being associated with him in the good cause to which his whole time was generously and unsparingly devoted have lost a valued friend, to whom all of them looked up with respect and admiration. He was cut off in the full vigour of his physical and mental powers, a victim, we fear, to his unceasing devotion to the good of his fellow-creatures.

Mr. Brotherton has "peacefully passed away to his higher home" and more congenial sphere. To us he seemed to abound in the spirit of goodness and fraternal love. It was pleasant to be with him, from the kindly genial sympathy which abounded in his nature. To such a man, though so sadly needed here, and therefore with duties so onerous and so pressing, the change to the bright spiritual world can never come too soon for his own happiness. Though unknown by name to many of our readers, he contributed a series of articles in our volumes of 1863-4 on "Spheres and Atmospheres," under the signature of "Libra." They are amongst the best and most philosophical applications of Spiritualism with which we have been favoured, and we have adduced them as examples of what has been done, when opponents have asked us to shew some of the philosophy which we speak of as flowing from Spiritualism. Mr. Brotherton also furnished us with the first particulars of the hauntings of Herr Joller's house, near Lucerne, and which appeared in the Magazine for November 1863. He made a personal investigation of the truth of the manifestations. This remarkable case was afterwards treated at full length by Mr. Howitt, who made it one of the *causes célèbres* of Spiritualism.